Malaysian Airline delegation arrives

AMMAN (Petra) — The chairman of the board of directors of the AMMAN (retta) — The Chairman of the court of the coors of the Maleysian Airlines, Tajuddin Ramli, arrived here Tuesday heading a delegation on a three-day visit to Jordan for talks with Royal Jordanian (RJ) officials. In an arrival statement, Mr. Ramli said he would discuss with RJ officials means of enhancing cooperation in the fields of aviation, air transport of passengers and goods. RI Director General and Chief Executive officer Nader Al Dahabi, Director General and Chief executive officer Nader Al Dahabi, landed relations between Jordan and Malaysia in air transport, noting that RJ has two regular weekly flights to Malaysia in accordance with an agreement signed by both countries in 1985. He said the RJ was trying to reach an agreement with Malaysia to increase the number of weekly flight to three. The Malaysian delegation was received upon arrival by Finance Minister and Charman of the RJ Board of Directors Basil Jardaneh, Mr. Dahabi and the Consul of Malaysia in Amman Abdul Hay Al Majali in addition to senior RJ officials.

Jordan Tim

جوردان تليمز يومية سياسية تصدر بالانجليزية عن المؤسسة الصحفية الأردنية ،الراي،

AMMAN WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 11, 1995, SHAABAN 10,1415

Morocco murder trial adjourned FEZ (AFP) - The trial of 18 people accused in an attack on a

Moroccan hotel last August that left two people dead was adjourned for eight days Monday to give defence attorneys more anjourned for eight days Monday to give defence attorneys more time to prepare. Hours after the proceedings got under way, the five-judge court agreed to a motion by attorneys for some of 11 alleged accomplices in the attack to postpone the trial until Jan. 18. The prosecution did not object. The seven main defendants are accused of carrying out an attack that Moroccan officials say was part of a plot by militant organisations bent on destabilising the Moroccan government. Morocco also said the attack was master-minded mainly by Algerians inside and outside Algeria. The seven main defendants face the death penalty if convicted. Three of the seven main defendants have dual Franco-Algerian or Franco-Moroccan patienties Sevenante and Indian Algerian or Franco-Moroccan nationality, Stephane Ait Iddir, 22, a Franco-Algerian and Redouane Hammadi, 26, a Franco-Moroccan, both from a Paris suburb, are alleged to have carried out the Aug. 24 attack on the Atlas-Asni Hotel in Marrakesh with the aid of Tarik Falah, a Franco-Moroccan now in jail in Germany.

Price: Jordan 150 Fils

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was important to the legalising as Rabin says no withdrawal to 1967 lines

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dnaking heer, while the CAIRO (Agencies) — Egypten: an all-time to Musa said Tuesday that ported dranking her call-Palestine Liberation posted drinking bear Israel-Palestine Liberation past year That figure Organisation (PLO) talks to end 75 per cent a extend Palestinian self-rule and 75 per cent a extend Palestinian self-rule While incoming were in crisis and that Jewish While incoming one settlement building jeoparding alcohol skew dised the entire Middle East

Volume 19 Number 5815

dised the entire reached the case process.

It is not reached the peace process.

It is not reached the ultimate crisis yet but it is a respect in 1994 said the cultimate the crisis situation," Mr. Musa said, after attending talks because the company smoked that quently smoked tobac tween PLO Chairman Yasser from 1.0 last year k. Arafat and Egyptian Presition, many studenting dent Hosni Mubarak.

A lotal of 24.1 perce, serious policy, a very serious the overwhelms affair that would affect the "Settlement policy is a very The survey of 333% would affect the future, not denis from 670 school only of the Palestinian, but some for the Higher all the process of peace."

He said Israel's settlement policy was "a violation" of the autonomy accords and international law.

Mr. Musa also accused Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin of making statements which were undermining the peace process.

"To speak of a war in the please and a manufacture to the concept of peace. teddy that and a meaning to me concept the statements the king of rock y. He was referring to a com-

ment by Mr. Rabin published in the Israeli daily Haaretz on Supday that the Jewish state "should prepare itself for a war in the more or less long

Mr. Rabin reasserted on Tuesday he would oppose a mined no-man's land before

PLO seeks U.S. help

Authority (PNA) has asked the United States to put pressure on Israel to halt the expansion of Jewish settlements, Palestinian lead negotiator Nabil Shaath said here

He was speaking after another round of Israeli-Palestinian talks to extend Palestinian self-rule on the West Bank ended without

"We have asked the U.S. consul in Jerusalem for his country to call on Israel to halt all forms of settlement to safeguard the peace pro-' Mr. Shaath said.

"The issue of the expansion of existing settlements remains the gap dividing us,"

fuil Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank.

Speaking to Israeli high school students during a tour of Jerusalem, he said: "I never supported and I do not support withdrawal to the '67

Mr. Rabin repeated Israel's claim to all of the Holy City, including Arab East Jerusalem.

"The supreme thing above all is a united Jerusalem as the capital of Israel under Israeli sovereignty," Mr. Rabin said at the school in a part of the city that was a

In Paris, Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres denied that there was any "crisis" in Israeli-Palestinian talks on autonomy, saying he was confident that a settlement could be reached.

Asked about comments by his Egyptian counterpart Amr Musa during the day, when he said that autonomy negotiations were going through a crisis, Mr. Peres said talks would continue for two or three months.

"There is no crisis at all. We began the second round of negotiations between us and the Palestinians. Yesterday I spoke with Yasser Arafat and I believe that we can continue these discussions."

the 1967 war. He said that for its own self-rule council. security, Israel would also have to hold on to parts of

the West Bank which border Jordan. "I want the Jordan border, the River Jordan to be the security border of the state of Israel," Mr. Rabin said. On Monday Mr. Musa said

in Cairo a normalisation of Arab-Israeli ties depended on Israel withdrawing from all occupied Arab land.

Israel 'will not have peaceful relations with the Arabs until it hands over the (occu-pied) territories," Mr. Musa

told the upper house of the Egyptian parliament, in remarks quoted by Al Ahram

Mr. Musa was due to hold further talks with Mr. Arafat late Tuesday, before the PLO leader returns to the autonomous Gaza Strip on Wednesday.

The foreign minister said earlier that a meting between Mr. Arafat and Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres Monday at the Erez crossing between Israel and Gaza had been good. But he said the same issues

would be raised again when Mr. Arafat met Mr. Rabin, which he said would be a "very important meeting." Israeli radio said the meeting would take place on Jan. 19 Israel and the PLO ended

another round of negotiations Tuesday failing to agree on arrangements for organising Palestinian elections to a

"So far there is no agreement on any of the issues. It's time to start jointly drawing up a summary of the points of disagreement on elections," the head of the Palestinian team, Saeb Erakat, said.

He said the major disagreements were over the eligibility of Palestinians living in Arab East Jerusalem, the size of the new autonomy council and the supervision of the elections.

"The Israelis are still refus-

(Continued on page 7)



Jewish settlers from the West Bank settlement off an area of approximately 1.5 kilometres of Elkana pull out barbed wire as they fence

Settlers fence off Palestinian farmland; protesters tear-gassed

going to create a 'fait accom-

pli' at Elkana and elsewhere

in (the West Bank) and we

will not allow Palestinian

ELKANA, occupied West Bank (Agencies) — Police tear-gassed dozens of Palestinian protestors as Israeli settlers fenced off land farmed by Palestinians on the occupied West Bank on Tuesday, witnesses said.

Dozens of Palestinians demonstrated as some 300 settles gathered to support the provocative move on a hilltop beside the colony of Elkana, just 20 kilometres from Tel Aviv.

"People from the neighbouring village of Zawiyah tried to halt the work but the soldiers blocked them," said Chawki Issa, spokesman for the Palestinian Land and Water Committee which resists land expropriations.

"Some people were rrested and the army fired teargas," he said.

Israeli Communications Minister Shulamit Aloni called for a "total halt" to the work which she warned jeopardised the peace process with the Palestine Liberation Organisation

tors as they marched down a road towards the fields. The army said it had given

some 300 settlers which took place peacefully. Elkana "mayor" Nissan

approval for a gathering of

(PLO). Police blocked the protes-

another site close by. Hundreds of Palestinians

Meanwhile, troops used Smiliansky said: "We are force overnight to stop the

founding of a new illegal settlement near the West Bank town of Ramallah, military officials said. Several hundred settlers

troublemakers to prevent us from asserting our presence.' The settlers erected barbed wire around the land, which includes olive groves, and used two buildozers to break the ground ready for conby Palestinians. struction.

According to Mr. Smiliansky, the nine hectares are government land" and are part of the Elkana municipal area, where 3,000 Israelis

"If the inhabitants of the surrounding Arab villages come to disturb us we will know how to greet them," threatened Mr. Smiliansky, who is also security chief for the West Bank and Gaza

councils. The move came a week arter clashes erupted at the settlement of Ephrat, south of Bethlehem, when settlers tried to expand the colony to encompass a nearby hill-top.

The army intervened and the government banned the development, but allowed the settlers to take over

have demonstrated against the expansion of settlements in recent days.

forced their way past a military road bloc and parked a caravan near Halamish settlement where a young Israeli woman was shot dead Friday

The army said it confronted hundreds of settlers before dawn, pushing aside a mobile home they tried to illegally place at the site ab-out 12 kilometres northwest of Ramallah. It said 14 settlers were detained before order was restored.

Israel radio said only one remained in custody hours

Settlers, angry at the drive-KIIII on Friday, accused Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's government of giving in to Palestinian demands to turn over what they refer to as the "land of Israel."

Hundreds of residents of nearby Jewish settlements gathered at the site before 3 a.m. They brought in a mobile home on a truck and dozens of settlers began sing-

A few dozen settlers who did not agree to evacuate and upset traffic on the main road were evacuated," an army statement said.

King to visit **Qatar**

By Caroline Farrai Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — His Majesty King Hussein is expected to visit Qatar "soon" for talks with the Qatari emir, Sheikh Hamad Ben Al Thani, on Jordanian-Qatari ties and inter-Arab relations, diplomatic sources said Tues-

During the visit, the King will discuss with Sheikh Hamad the state of disarray in Arab ranks and means to restore Arab unity and solidarity, the diplomatic sources told the Jordan Times and Al Ra'i on condition of anonym-

Jordanian-Oatari ties have improved dramatically after the strain caused by the 1990 Gulf crisis. His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan visited Doha and the Qatari foreign minister paid a visit to Amman last year.

Arafat expected here

Sources also said Tuesday that Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat was expected in Amman in the next few days.

"The exact date for (Mr. Arafat's) visit to Jordan is not clear yet, but it would be soon," said one source.

The focus of talks between the King and Mr. Arafat, chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and chairman of the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) in autonomous Gaza and Jericho, is expected to be Jordanian-Palestinian political and economic relations.

The two leaders also are of the Middle East peace

Mr. Arafat visited Jordan shortly before he entered the Gaza Strip in July after ending several decades of exile and headed the PNA. Reports since then have often said he was planning to visit Jordan, but Jordanian insistence that a visit for the sake of visiting was not enough and that the PLO leader should be prepared to discuss and finalise substantive issues appeared to have delayed the

Algerian opposition **U.S.: Iraq-retains** drafts peace plan

ers from Algeria's legal and illegal opposition meeting in Rome said Tuesday they had nearly finished a joint statecracy" to the country.

has claimed more than 10,000 lives in two years. But Algiers has denounced the initiative as outside "interference" and declined to send a delegation.

"Tomorrow we shall finish talks" with the militarybacked regime, said former Algerian President Ahmad Ben Bella who heads the Algerian Democratic Move-

does not respond to our offer for a dialogue we will carry on anyway among ourselves," said Hocine Ait Ahmad, head of the moderate Socialist Forces Front

They were among six of the delegates who spoke at a press conference, including a delegate from the key out-

lawed Islamic Salvation Front (FIS), U.S.-based Anwar Mr. Haddam, saying he spoke for the FIS leadership. said "there is hope" to "try to find a political solution to the

crisis" in Algeria. Mr. Haddam told the news sis and provides hope for its

poised to win.

Mr. Haddam said the FIS "firmly supports the armed struggle for a just cause, though the armed struggle is not an end in itself, but a means" to re-establish democratic order in Algeria.

"makes a clear distinction between the terrorism we have always condemned and the armed struggle" for a demo-The FIS delegate also "re-

France are breaking their silence" and refusing to support the regime of Algerian President Liamine Zeroual. He gave no names, however.

The FIS has assailed France, the former colonial power, for its military and economic support of the Algiers regime.

were: Abdul Nour Ali Yahya, a lawyer and head of the Algerian Human Rights League, Abdul Al Hamid Mehri, general secretary of the former ruling National Liberation Front (FLN), and Louisa Hannoun, spokeswoman for the Algerian Workers Party.

Kuwaiti equipment

UNITED NATIONS (Agencies) - The United States circulated data and photographs among Security Counmembers on Tuesday which it said showed Iraq still retained some 9,000 pieces of military equipment, plus thousands of civilian items, taken from Kuwait during the Gulf war.

The equipment included missile launchers and armoured pesonnel carriers used by Iraq in a military build-up which threatened Kuwait last October, U.S. spokesman James Rubin told reporters.

American Ambassador Madeleine Albright displayed the evidence, including satellite photographs, as the Security Council was about to conduct a periodic review of sanctions imposed on Baghdad following its August 1990 invasion of Kuwait.

Mr. Rubin said Iraq's failure to return the Kuwaiti equipment, as required by council resolutions, raised serious questions about its credibility and peaceful intentions, which the council must take into account in conducting its review of sanctions. These include a ban on Iraqi oil exports.

At the time of the last such review in mid-November. Ms. Albright produced satellite photographs said to show that Iraq was spending at least half a billion dollars on what she said were "literally dozens of opulent new palaces" for the use of President Saddam Hussein and his

family, even though he com-plained that sanctions were causing Iraqis great personal

hardship.
Diplomats say they expected the Security Council to retain the embargo while extending suspension of sanctions originally imposed on Belgrade for helping Bosnian

Iraqi Vice-Prime Minister Tareq Aziz, who is in New York to plead his country's cause, arrived Sunday in a slightly stronger position since France decided to open an interest section in the Romanian embassy in Bagh-

Some countries, including Kuwait, have argued that Iraq's formal recognition of Kuwait and its borders in November is a major step in the right direction.

But despite the sharply decreased standard of living suffered by the Iraqi people in the past five years, Security Council members continue to be angered by Iraq's defiance. The United States and Britain, in particular, argue that Iraq has not yet met the conditions laid out for lifting the embargo on oil sales. Ms. Albright said Tuesday

she would be surprised if sanctions were lifted soon. Rolf Ekeus, head of the U.N. commission overseeing Iraq's disarmament, said Thursday that despite probiems in long-term monitoring of Iraq's weapons capabili-ties, the U.N. system was still provisionally operational.

the U.S. and Alzheimer's disease afflicting with of Royal Reagan has action Ronald with officer lead to the stage when the control of de o the stage where he is un-ASSOCIATION for some to recognise old friends of Colours and recording to his biographer.

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isto vinguris 60th bink
Write a case fit for at congratulations AMMAN (J.T.) — Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker on Tuesday received congratulations from His Majesty King Hussein's advisors, former prime ministers, director of the General Intelligence Department and senior intelligence officers, senior civil and military officials, tribal chiefs and representatives of the professional and trade unions, parties' leaders, heads of the women's federation and wolumbary societies, heads of and trade unions, parties' sked to a voluntary societies, heads of and foreign diplomatic enacipal and and foreign diplomatic enacipal and essentiatives of peoples from all

February MONN (AFP) — The Gercancel dance man government will see to it
that Rabab Kaling school danger that Rabah Kebir, head of the controlled the external leadership of the Algerian Islamic Salvation who has a wife feckhart Werthebach, speakblack mething on the German television
and maintains that here are news channel NTV black melt ing ou the German television news channel NTV, was reterring to Ayatollah Ruholshah Khomeini, who built up a following while in exile in Europe before taking power in the Islamic revolution which when she high short the name t

the principal acciline Tast'

thing him up, has said VEW YORK (AFP) — The district has as "trees" and seemed a staffering from present to



A wounded Chechen fighter is carried away after ne was hit by shrapnel in central Grozny

Chechens marshal forces during 48-hour 'ceasefire'

GROZNY (Agencies) -Chechen fighters reinforced their positions in their battered capital Grozny and Russian troops launched new attacks on city centre targets on Tuesday, making non-sense of a ceasefire called by

Chechen separatists used a full following the official start of the 48-hour truce on Tuesday morning to pour men and arms into front-line positions, and showed no signs of heeding the Kremlin's appeal to down arms.

Reporters who cross the Sunzha River bridge on foot saw Russian mortar bombs, artillery shells and rocketpropelled grenades landing in Freedom Square in front of separatist President Dzhokhar Dudayev's shellblackened palace.

Spurts of heavy fighting broke out north of the square in an area where the Chechens face Russian tanks and infantry. Hundreds of civilians, trapped by more than a month of

advantage of the respite to flee the capital, lugging suitcases and bedding. "Both sides are resting now and soon there will be

ferocious street fighting, took

heavy fighting again," said 29-year old Musa, a Chechen fighter helping his mother to evacuate her apartment.

destroy Grozny to beat us.

We are killing so many of them. They want to go home. We have taken many prisoners." he said. Within hours of the truce coming into effect at 8 a.m. (0500 GMT), Russia's military command said its soldiers

had suspended hostilities but

accused the rebels of continuing to shoot. Russia's human rights commissioner, Sergei Kovalyov, returning to Grozny after a brief stay in Moscow, denounced the terms of the ceasefire. He said Moscow's statements amounted to no more than new ultimatums to Chechens to lay down their

The Kremlin, which sent troops into the region on Dec. 11 to crush its drive for independence, called the ceasefire after several days of fierce artillery and mortar attacks on the presidential building in Grozny to break Chechen resistance.

A government statement

issued overnight said the

proposed two-day truce

and again attempt to resolve the Chechen conflict by peaceful means." Another statement called "The Russians will have to on the Chechens "to leave

their positions and armour,

lay down their weapons and

free all people seized in hosti-

Both sides blamed each

other for breaking the cease-The head of the general staff of Chechen separatist forces, Aslan Maskhadov, said in an interview with AFP inside the besieged palace

that the ceasefire was not acceptable to the Chechens. The ceasefire was a "trick" which had been quickly violated by the Russian military, an attempt by Moscow to avoid a bloodbath for its troops by getting the Chechens to surrender, he

But the Russian government press service said that the Chechen defenders of Grozny had used mortars and rockets soon after the ceasefire started, and that Russian units were forced to respond after 10:00 a.m. (0700 GMT). In Moscow, Prime Minister

(Continued on page 7)

ROME (Agencies) — Lead- conference: "This document

ment for Algeria's military regime to propose opening talks and "returning demo-The meeting, sponsored by a Catholic church group. aims at ending a civil war that

work on a platform that will link all political parties present here towards opening

ment. "If the power (in Algiers)

will truly answer the main questions of the Algerian cri-

solution." Western intelligence services estimate that between 20,000 and 30,000 Algerians have been killed in civil strife since the cancellation in January 1992 of general elections which the FIS was

He stressed his party

cratic end. joiced" that "some people in

The other three delegates

Israel has agreed to recognise PNA passports -Shaath

GAZA CITY (AFP) — Israel has recognised the validity of Palestinian passports issued by the Palestinian National Authority (PNA), Palestinian chief negotiator Nabil Shaath said Monday.

The passports are usually green, but red ones are issued for officials in the PNA. They are labelled "Travel Document — Passport" and bear the word "Palestinian Au-

Dr. Shaath said he was "very optimistic" that Israel would soon free more Palestinian prisoners.

He was speaking to repor-ters after talks between Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat and Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres at the Erez border crossing into the autonomous

Israel would first release the 35 women who are among some 6.000 Palestinian prisoners held by the Jewish state, Dr. Shaath said.

An agreement on "safe passages" linking the Gaza Strip and the West Bank enclave of Jericho would go into effect next week, said Dr. Shaath, who is also Palestinian planning minister.

He said Palestinians aged

under 16 as well as men over 50 and women over 35 would be able to move freely between Gaza and the West

PNA employees would also be able to travel between Gaza and Jericho without hindrance, but Israel would maintain the right to grant or refuse permission for other

Mr. Arafat and Mr. Peres, who last met on Dec. 21, both emerged in a positive mood from two hours of talks at the Erez crossing.

We... have to overcome a lot of difficulties but we think we'll get an agreement on the second phase (of autonomy)," Mr. Peres said.
"While we are analysing difficulties, we are also seeing

solutions. 'In spite of all the worries and scepticism, the Oslo agreement is being implemented, although we are

late in some ways."
Under the 1993 declaration of principles for autonomy, Palestinian elections were to be held by last July after a redeployment of Israeli troops outside built-up areas on the West Bank.

But the Israeli government, increasingly unpopular as attacks continue, is refusing to pull back until security improves and negotiations

Dr. Shaath also said Mr. Arafat would visit Morocco on Jan. 16 and 17 for a meeting of the Jerusalem Committee, set up by the Organisation of the Islamic Conference in 1979.

Jerusalem taiks

Four ministers in the PNA held talks with officials from Berlin in an East Jerusalem hotel Monday, despite an Israeli ban on PLO diplomatic activities in the Holy City.

Dozens of Israeli policemen ringed the Ambassador Hotel but did not interrupt the meeting, Palestinian officials

"We discussed the peace process and ways to provide humanitarian and medical aid," said Christine Bergmann, Berlin regional minister for labour and womens'

The talks were attended by Palestinian Social Affairs Minister Intissar Wazir, Health Minister Riad Al Zaanoun, Housing Minister Zakaria Al Agha and Youth and Sports Minister Azmi Al

Ms. Bergmann said the meeting was held after consultation with the Israeli foreign ministry, but a ministry okesman later denied that the Israeli authorities had been informed before it took

The Israeli parliament adopted a law on Dec. 26 aimed at restricting official PLO activities in Jerusalem.

The law prevents the PLO or the PNA from opening a mission in East Jerusalem without prior Israeli permission, or organising public meetings there.



RABIN ABUSED: Israeli policemen pull young Jewish boys out from the western wall in Jerusalem's Old City as they were disturbing Israeli Premier Yitzhak Rabin's tour of the city on Tuesday. The group of ultra-orthodox Jews accused Mr. Rabin of treachery chanting "Traitor, traitor get out of

here" before being removed by security services. They also charged Mr. Rabin with preparing to allow Palestisian leader Yasser Arafat to visit Jerusalem. Mr. Rabin went to the wall on a tour of Jerusalem quarters with the mayor Ehud Olmert (AFP photo)

Egyptian mufti calls Rushdie book 'lies'

NEW YORK (R) — The grand mufti of Egypt Mohammad Sayyid Tantawi said Monday a controversial novel by British author Salman Rushdie was "a collection of lies and a collection of insults and vices."

But he sidestepped the isse of the death sentence imposed on the Indian-born writer in 1989 by the late Iranian leader Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini on grounds that his book, "The Satanic Verses", blasphemed

Dr. Tantawi, now on a visit to the United States, told a news conference: "As mufti of Egypt, I am opposed, I am opposed, I am opposed to killing. At the same time I am opposed to lying, I am opposed to lying.
The mufti, appointed by

the Egyptian government, is the highest Islamic authority in the country and issues oninions on various issues involving the interpretation of chief pursuit is the pursuit of

iustice."

Speaking through an inter-preter, Dr. Tantawi said the accompanied by the president of the Protestant churcountry where Mr. Rushdie lived should select three religious scholars --- a Jew, a ches in Egypt, Dr. Samuel Habib, said the intention of Christian and a Muslim who should study his book, his visit was to "demonstrate discuss what he had written to the American people the tolerant face of Islam... and and ask the author the source of his insulting assertions rethat Islam and Muslims seek garding the Prophet Mohamto extend the hand of mad and Islam. friendship and of justice to

"All objective laws specify a punishment for anyone who speaks lies against others," Dr. Tantawi said. "After the (panel's) discussion of what Rushdie has

written, I will be satisfied

with their judgment," he "What Salman Rushdie has written is a collection of lies and a collection of insults _and vices which cannot be uttered by a decent human

"My judgment, therefore, is that Salman Rushdie is a religious-less person whose

Islamists destroy

mausoleums Dr. Tantawi, who was ADEN (AFP) — Islamic fun-damentalists have destroyed several mansoleums honouring senior Yemeni clerics in a campaign against the monu-ments which they consider to be un-Islamic, newspapers

The daily Al Thawra said dynamite to blow up the Mohammad Ben Ali Mansoleum overnight Saturday in the Waht area of the southern governorate of

Other reports said the Ahmad Hamid Al Aidarus mansoleum in Al Gawaze village, 195 kilometres south of the capital Sanaa, was blown ap Friday.

The papers said similar an American court and "it is our custom and practice in attacks on mansolenms, were Egypt that we do not address carried out in the past few days in other regions, includ-ing Zaidiya, 225 kilometres ourselves to a case that is in west of Sanaa.

the hands of the legal system." he said. Some Kuwait detainees

KUWAIT (R) - Some in- to Iraq because of its 1990-91 mates at a Kuwaiti detention centre for expatriate awaiting deportation have been held there for four years, members of parliament said in a statement published on

anyone who wishes to reach

out also in friendship and

He declined to comment

on the trial, which opened in

New York earlier in the day,

of a blind Egyptian cleric,

Sheikh Omar Abdul Rah-man, and 11 of his followers

accused of plotting to bomb

The matter was now before

U.S. landmarks.

The numbers of inmates at the Talha centre has risen to 535 from 350 in January last year, parliament's human rights committee, which toured the facility on Monday, added in a statement

how many people had been in Talah for four years or give their nationality. But diplo-mats have said on average around 10 per cent of the inmates have been in the

Talha, a converted school, was set up after the 1991 Gulf war. Its inmates include foreign convicts in criminal and national security cases who have completed prison terms and are awaiting deportation.

It also houses people who lack work permits, some of them Iraqi job-seekers who have been unable to find work from employers hostile occupation.

The Kuwaiti government says it will not force the Iraqis to go back home and international humanitarian organisations say many third countries are unwilling to accept them as refugees, so they are stranded for the time being at

ably for overcrowding.

The parliamentarians' statement published in the English-language Arab Times and Kuwait Times said they had found some conditions had improved over the past 12 months but others remained in need of improvement and officials had prom-

Jordan undergoes cautious change

By Jack Redden

AMMAN — King Hussein, seeing both dangers and opportunities in Jordan's peace treaty with Israel. has come down on the side of caution with a government of familiar faces led by a former armed forces commander.

The newspaper Al Ra'i said the focus of the gov-ernment sworn in on Sunday evening had been de-fined in the naming of Sherif Zeid Bin Shaker as premier for the third time in six years: "The letter of designation reflects a continuity in governing."

For months, before and after the signing of a peace treaty with Israel last October, members of the government and Royal family had talked of the need for quick reforms to capitalise on the economic opportunities presented by ending 46 years of conflict.

However, there has also been a growing effort to dampen Jordanian expectations against quick benefits and repeated warnings that opposition to the peace treaty would be tightly con-

The need to overhaul the business atmosphere was mentioned as the government was changed, but diplomats noted an emphasis on maintaining stability as Jordan enters an upredictable post-peace world. "That's been the mes-

sage for months: 'Whether you like it or not, Jordan has signed a peace with Israel and that's the way it's going to be'," said a Western diplomat, who predicted little economic in-

The tone is set by the choice of Sharif Zeid to head his third government in six years. His first term was in 1989 when he was called in to take over when the previous government was forced from office by

price riots.
Sharif Zeid, a close friend of the King and member of the Hashemite. Royal family, had been commander of the Armed Forces for 12 years until

A profile of the returning dan Times newspaper quoted him as saying: "I do not consider myself a professional politician. I am a professional soldier, which is the job I have chosen

from the beginning."
For his new 31-member cabinet. Sharif Zeid tapped more than 10 men from his previous governments. More important, former colleagues hold key portfolios such as finance, foreign affairs, industry and

The peace treaty with Israel, while a momentous step after decades of animosity, has not by itself solved any of Jordan's political and economic prob-

In the Arab World, it remains shunned by Saudi Arabia and other Gulf states, while signing a treaty further strained cool re-lations with Syria, still deadlocked in its own peace talks.

A collapse in the increasingly precarious Israeli-Palestinian peace would have repercussions inside Jordan, where many believe a majority of the

population is originally Palestinian. Inside Jordan, the peace treaty holds the promise of economic opportunities, but aside from the almost instantaneous rise in Israeli tourism. Jordanians will not feel an improvement in their own lives in the near

In the weeks preceding the King's decision to switch from Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali, the man who signed the peace pact, officials and even the King have been playing down hopes of a quick peace dividend.

When an Israeli chamber of commerce delegation visited Amman this month, a dinner hosted by the new Israeli embassy attracted scores of guests. But less than 10 were Jordanians including one government official — while the rest were foreigners.

In appointing the new premier, King Hussein b, alluded to the fears of outgight opposition to Jordan's R new path with Israel or a growing disappointment.

The switch, he said, came at a time "when we see people are obsessed by various feelings of optimism or expecting drastic era of peace and as we witness others discouraged, as they are not convinced by peace and are acting

Islamic scholars should promote dialogue - Kuwait

KUWAIT (R) — Scholars in a campaign by fundamental-the Muslim World should ist members of parliament to promote dialogue as an alternative to violence and teach respect for alternative points of view, Kuwait's Isla-mic affairs minister was reported on Tuesday as saying. The minister, Ali Al Zmei'a, was speaking at a con-

ference on trends in the Islamic World on Monday. "He urged scholars to focus... on developing dialogue as an alternative to violence and noted that violence with weapons, although widespread, is not the only

kind (of violence)," Al

Qabas daily reported.
"Islamist activists ask others to respect their freedom and work. This subject has to be included in the political and cultural programme of Islamists... because you cannot take and not give. That is an extremely important issue."

Mr. Zmei'a, an Islamist with a reputation as a moderate, was appointed in April 1994 in a cabinet reshuffle seen as reducing Islamist influence in the government. In the intervening months make society more Islamic has suffered a series of setbacks, notably in social and educational policy.

The government has tightened oversight of Kuwaiti charities accused of funnelling money to overseas Islamic militant groups. The charities deny the accusa-

"Islamist youngsters are being trained to reach for power to Islamise (societies) while there is more than one Islamic country where these movements reached power and nothing of that (Islamisation) happened," Mr. Zmei'a was reported as saying. '
He said he would like Isla-

mic law, partly the basis for Kuwait's legal code, to be developed with "moderation... and in keeping with

"The widening of the gap between interpretation (of Islamic rules and traditions) and the spirit of the age has caused a big gap that Islamic communities have started to reject," he was reported as

Afghan fighting threatens peace bid

KABUL (AFP) — Forces loyal to Afghan President Burhanuddin Rabbani have bombed an airbase south of Kabl in response to attacks by rival factions against Ghazni, the provincial capitai, military sources said Tues-

"Last night our jets bombed the enemy's airstrip in Logar, a pro-Rabbani military commander told He said the Dasht-i-

Sakhawa airstrip had been used over the past four nights by the alliance forces of Gul-buddin Hekmatyar and Uzbek General Abdul Rashid Dostum to fly some 400 troops from northern Afghanistan to south Kabul. Four days ago, Mr. Hekmatyar's Hezb-e-Islami faction fighters were alleged to have attacked the provincial capital Ghazni, 145 kilometres south of Kabul, but were repelled in a

erday's high temperatures; man 16 Aqaba 23, Humidity fings; Amman 23 per cent,

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IRRID:



Burhanuddin Rabbani

counter-attack that included strikes by pro-Rabbani jets, the military sources said. Ghazni is reportedly back under the control of forces loyal to Governor Qari Baba,

who is an ally of Mr. Rabba-According to pro-Rabbani military sources, the Dostum reinforcements were in-tended to bolster Mr. Hekmatyar's military efforts

against Ghazni. The renewed fighting came in the middle of a peace mission by U.N. special envoy Mahmoud Mestiri, who Tuesday was scheduled to meet Dostum in Mazar-e-Sharif in northern Afghanistan before flying to the westem capital Herat.

held 4 years — deputies

published in newspapers.

The statement did not say

facility for a year or more.

In April 1993 newspapers said Talha then held about 150 people and forecast the numbers would decline. Parliament and human rights activists have criticised conditions at the facility, not-

ised to carry this out.

The lawmakers, who met detainees and received oral and written complaints, said the centre lacked what they called essential facilities for the elderly and those needing

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA

NEWS IN BRIEF

Fiancee admits dismembering Turk lawyer

ANKARA (R) — A Turkish woman angered by the sexual advances of her fiancee told police she murdered him on New Year's Eve and hacked his body into seven pieces, the Cumhuriyet daily said on Tuesday. Seven pieces of Akar's body were found last week in plastic bags in a ventilation shaft of the building where he and his fiancee lived in separate flats, but his head was missing. Fatma Aydin, 21, told police she knifed Akar for making sexual advances and then burnt the head in the stove, the paper said. Both were known to be religious Muslims, the paper said.

Egypt to launch TV satellite in 1997

CAIRO (AFP) — Egypt is planning to launch a television satellite covering Arab countries in 1997. Information Minister Safuat Al Sharif has announced. "Work on setting up the satellite which will start in the middle of the year will last between 18 to 20 months," he told the official agency MENA. He added that 12-station Nile-Sat would cover the Arab region from "Algeria in the west up to the border with Iran in the east as well as certain Asian and African countries." He added that Egypt was to launch its eighth television channel this year. Unlike the newspaper industry, the state has a monopoly over the audio-visual sector.

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19:30	Home improvement
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20-30	Quantum Leap
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RJ Flight Information

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DEPARTURES

	Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)
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	10:00 Amsterdam, New York (RJ) 10:30 London (RJ)
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Her Majesty Queen Noor Tuesday chairs members of a preparatory committee to a meeting of members of the International plan a peace, employment and human Commission on Peace and Food and development conference (Petra photo)

Queen discusses peace, development with international panel

AMMAN (J.T.) — Her Majesty Queen Noor Tuesday met with members of the International Committee on Peace and Food (ICPF) and Jordanian members of a preparatory committee to plan a conference in Amman this spring on peace, employment and human development in the region, a Royal Court

statement said. The committee held. meetings in Amman on Monday and Tuesday to identify issues of maximum relevance to Jordan and the region, the statement said.

The preparatory committee held its final session at Al Ma'wa Palace Tuesday to brief the Queen, who has been a member of the ICPF since 1992, on the findings and recommendations of their two-day meeting, it said.

According to the statement, ICPF members Garry Jacobs and Robert Van Harten participated. The statement said

ICPF proposal to hold a

conference in Amman as the first stage in a process leading to the formulation and implementation of specific practical measures to improve peace, human security and prosperity in

the region. Focusing on the need to utilise the linkages between peace, democracy and development to improve the quality of life of the people in the region, Queen Noor said the recommendations of the ICPF are especially relevant to Jordan and to the countries of the Middle East, the statement said.

It added that the report proposes the utilisation of the region's military resources for development and presents a comprehensive strategy for employment generation. According to the Royal Court, the Queen expressed the hope that the Amman conference would reflect Jordan's commitment to human development, the reduction in defence spending and

and economic integration. In the discussion, the statement said, Garry Jacobs expressed ICPF commitment to Jordan and its dedication to human development. Mr. Jacobs added that the conference was intended to examine the relevance and application of ICPF's final report, "Uncommon Opportunities: An Agenda for Peace and Equitable Develop-

ment," to Jordan, the

statement said. Although based on a global perspective, the report, which was presented by Queen Noor, on behalf of the commission, to the United Nations Secretary General late last year, also presents practical strategies that can be implemented in a broad range of developing countries, the statement added.

Also attending the briefing were members of the preparatory committee, In am Mufti, Development and Planning Adviser to the Queen, and other

50 women municipal council appointees to be trained in responsibilities — QAF

the promotion of strategies

b for regional cooperation

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Ministry of Municipal and Rural Affairs and the Environment is planning a training course at the end of the month for the 50 women appointed to municipal councils by the government last

A spokesman for the is cooperating with the minismembers to the councils, said

that the new appointees have taken up their posts in their respective regions. Last October the government appointed 29 women to the councils following the efforts of Her Royal Highness Princess Basma, honorary chairperson of the QAF Board of Trustees to encourage the in-

municipal laws and skills required for their basic responsibilities in their own communities.

The first workshop was held from Nov. 24 to 25 for the first group of 29.

The serving municipal councils have been appointed by the government, after the dissolution of the elected

These councils will serve until municipal elections are

volvement of women in pub-Queen Alia Fund for Social Development (QAF), which councils last year. According to the QAF try in the selection of women spokesman, the new council members will be oriented on

to reconsider economic aid to Russia

Chechen community appeals to U.S.

By Cathy King Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The Chechen community in Jordan has appealed on behalf of the people of Chechenya to U.S. ecretary of State Warren Christopher to reconsider the United States' position on economic development aid to

In a letter made available to the Jordan Times, the Jordanian Committee for the Support for the Independent Caucasian Chechen Republic (JCSCP) Chairman and former Minister of Public Works Said Beano addressed Mr. Christopher, saying: "The Chechen nation appeals to your excellency to reconsider the U.S. position regarding economic development aid to Russia by the U.S. government, the World Bank and the International Monetary

Mr. Beano also called for the holding of an internationally supervised referendum in the Chechen republic in which the Chechen people . may exercise their right to self-determination; the exertion of pressure on Moscow to pay reparations resulting from its aggression against the Chechen nation and to

pay reparations for the exile to exploit its natural re-of the whole of the Chechen sources." nation to Siberia.

In 1944 Soviet President Joseph Stalin ordered mass deportations of Chechens to Siberia, which, according to Mr. Beano resulted in the "death of 50 per cent of its (Chechenya's) population."
Under the leadership of

Nikita Khrushchev, the Comnunist Party of the former Soviet Union permitted the repatriation of the Chechen people to their homeland in 1957.

According to recent figures the Chechen population currently stands at 1.2 million. Mr. Beano then called for the encouragement of "U.S. businesses to invest in Chechenya in the fields of oil and gas, construction, industry, agriculture and other social and economic sectors."

Grozny, the breakaway republic's capital, has, in recent weeks, come under repeated air raids and heavy artillery fire causing extensive damage

and loss of life. According to news agency dispatches the city is now without running water and

electricity. "The purpose of this aggression," wrote Mr. Beano, "is to dominate and oppress a weaker nation and

The JCSCP letter was sent to the U.S. embassy in Jordan to be forwarded to Mr. Christopher.

An embassy official told the Jordan Times yesterday, "in terms of the letter, we have received it and forwarded it to the secretary of

He added that the embassy had no official reaction or comment in regards to the letter and referred further questions on the position of the U.S. on this issue to information released by the Washington-based United States Information Agency

According to a recent USIA report, Mr. Christ-opher said that the U.S. supported the territorial integrity of Russia and would be opposed to any attempt to change its borders either through aggression from outside or from insurrection inside," but added that "we deplore the loss of life (and) the heavy casualties that are

taking place in Chechenya." Mr. Christopher is scheduled to meet Russian Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev on Jan. 17-18 to discuss the situation in the Chechen re-

jolet a planned seminar in Amman to illumin- establishment of a Middle East bank and ate the European Union's (EU) role in the preparations to hold the Amman economic tegion, particularly in Jordan. The seminar, in summit later this year.

Kabariti, French envoy discuss EU seminar which representatives of the private and public sectors in the European Community countries will participate, will also discuss the

Qatar proposes creation of joint bank

Premier, visiting Qatari official review bilateral ties

AMMAN (Petra) — Qatar has proposed the creation of a Jordanian-Oatari bank in Doha, according to Ministry of Foreign Affairs Secretary General Nayef Hadid who Tuesday reported on a meeting between Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker and visiting Qatari Foreign Ministry Under-Secretary Ahmad Ben Abdullah Al Mahmoud.

committees to promote bilateral cooperation in various fields. Sharif Zeid described Jordanian-Qatari relations as exemplary.

At the meeting, Sharif Zeid said Jordan was determined to advance relations and that Amman was inwith the Kingdom at the

terested in reviving the work of the Jordanian-Qatari joint tional levels.

Mr. Mahmoud, who congratulated Sharif Zeid on the formation of his new government, said Qatar was intent on maintaining the strongest possible relations with Jordan at all levels and was hoping to coordinate its political stands

He also voiced Qatar's full backing of Jordan's peace efforts, expressing hope that peace with Israel would also be achieved on the Israeli-Syrian and Israeli-Lebanese tracks,

Mr. Hadid, who attended the meetings, said later that the two sides reviewed ways for further promoting their relations through new agree-ments and trade protocols.

He said the Qatari proposal for a joint bank entails 75 per cent Qatari ownership and 25 per cent Jordanian

Mr. Hadid also announced that the Qatari official suggested the creation of a joint private university in Qatar which would employ mainly Jordanian expertise and staff.

> the Qatari proposals met with positive response from the Jordanian side.

The Qatari side suggested

According to Mr. Hadid

mittee to organise land transport operations similar to agreements between Qatar and other Arab states.

According to Mr. Hadid, Jordan has requested that Oatar facilitate Jordanians wishing to obtain visas to visit Qatar, and the Qatari side expressed understanding of this request, adding that the higher joint Jordanian-Qatari committee was due to hold a meeting in Doha in April.

Prime minister visits Parliament speakers

AMMAN (Petra) — Prime ment's policy statement Minister Sharif Zeid Ben which will be presented to the Shaker Tuesday called at the Parliament where he met with the speakers of the Upper and Lower Houses of Parliament, Ahmad Lawzi and Sa'd Hayel Srour.

In a statement to the Jordan News Agency, Petra, Mr. Srour said the prime minister stressed his government's keen interest in cooperating with the legislative power on the basis of mutual respect and respect for political pluralism in accordance with the constitutional and legislative mechanisms in force.

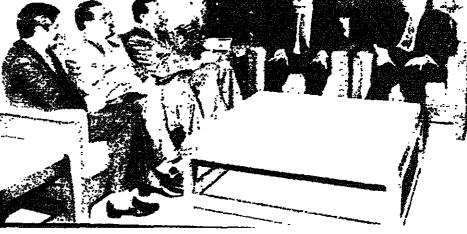
He added that discussion also covered the govern-

House for debate before the

end of January.

Mr. Srour said he hoped that both the legislative and executive branches can work out a mechanism for coopera-

Sharif Zeid was accompanied on the visit by Deputy Prime Minister and Education Minister Abdul Raouf Rawabdeh, Deputy, Prime Minister and Information Minister Khaled Karaki, Minister of State for Prime Ministry Affairs Ibrahim Izzedine, Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs Abdul Majid Azzam, and Minister of State Taha



Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker Tuesday visits House Speaker Sa'd Hayel Srour at Parliament. Accompanying for Prime Ministry Affairs Ibrahim Izze-Sharif Zeid here are Deputy Premiers dine (right) (Petra photo)

Abdul Raouf Rawabdeh (second left) and Khaled Karaki (left) and Minister of State

HUDD contracts to build vocational training centre

AMMAN (Petra) — The Housing and Urban Development Department (HUDD) recently awarded a local construction firm a JD 226,500 contract to build a vocational training centre at Zarqa, north of Amman.

HUDD Director General Yousef Hiyasat said that the two-storey building will be set up at the HUDD's third housing estate in the city.

According to Mr. Hiyasat the contract covers civil works, including the laying of electricity cables, installing sanitary facilities, retaining walls, a public garden and a

He said the residents of the third HUDD housing estate in Zarqa live in 1,044 units set up at the cost of JD 1.4 million in addition to JD 1.8 million that were spent on building the social and other infrastructure services.

The residents of the housing estate will be the main beneficiaries of the new vocational centre.

Earlier, Mr. Hiyasat said HUDD set up girls and boys schools on a total of 26 dunums.

The housing estate is erved by a health centre and other basic services.

Visiting Chinese businessmen explore trade prospects.

AMMAN (Petra) — A visiting Chinese trade delegation held a meeting here Tuesday with Haidar Murad, chairman of the Federation of Jordanian Chambers of Commerce and discussed prospects of promoting Sino-Jordanian trade.

A spokesman for the Chinese team, which groups businessmen representing several economic institutions. said the group's visit to Jordan was part of a tour which includes Egypt and the United Arab Emirates (UAE). He said Jordan enjoys a

enabling it to play a key role in Middle East trade, adding that his talks with Jordanian businessmen would be positive on Chinese-Jordanian relations especially in economic and trade fields.

Mr. Murad briefed the Chinese delegation on Jordan's private sector activities and the opportunities for joint investments in the King-

The federation head received an invitation from the Chinese trade team to visit China to pursue talks on central geographic location advancing bilateral trade.

nominated by WERSC, in France, and will invite

Jordanian farmers to visit

French farms and applied

Jordanian, French specialists to study irrigation water use

AMMAN (J.T.) — The University of Jordan Water and Environment Research and Study Centre (WERSC), the Jordan Val-ley Authority (JVA) and the French Agricultural Mission (FAM) Tuesday concluded an agreement on optimisation of water use in horticulture.

The agreement aims to save water by rationalising its use in irrigating fruit trees and vegetables.

Under the accord, several experiments will be conducted on different fruit orchards and vegetable farms, and Jordanian and French experts will exchange visits and expertise in this field. FAM will provide French

experts to control the experiments, assess them and give technical advice. In addition, FAM will sponsor the training of Jordanian researchers.

The WERSC will carry out all laboratory tests and analysis required for the project, including soil, water and substrates tests. The JVA will provide

research centres.

technical and logistical support and will organise field days by inviting farmers to view the experimental pro-

The agreement was signed for the University of Jordan by its President, Fawzi Gharaibeh, and for FAM by the French Ambassador to Jordan Bernard Bajolet in the presence of JVA Secretary General Mohammad Bani Hani and WERSC Director Mohammad Shatanawi.

The signing took place at the French embassy.

WHAT'S GOING ON

Council at 7:00 p.m.

LITERARY DIALOGUE ☆ Dialogue with novelists Fu'ad Abu Hijleh and Basel Tallousi at the Phoenix Gallery for Culture and Art at

A weaving workshop at the Salt Handicrafts Training Centre (File photo)

NHF, Italy sign agreement on handicraft enterprises project

By Rana Husseini Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The government of Italy and Noor Al Hussein Foundation (NHF) Tuesday signed an agreement by which the Italian government will allocate funds for the startup of the "New Handicraft Enterprises" project within the framework of the Salt

Handicrafts Training Cen-The centre was established in 1987 in cooperation with the Salt Development Corporation and the Italian government to develop a new generation of skilled Jordanian crafts people, according to the NHF.

In'am Mufti, development and planning advisor to Her Majesty Queen Noor, and Jafar Shami, president of Salt Development Cooperation, signed the agreement on behalf of NHF, and Italian Ambassador to Jordan Romualdo Bettini signed on behalf of

his government.
The Italian side will grant JD20,000, the last part of the grant given by Italy to Jordan for the bilateral project, which has largely consisted of training activities, specialisation of Jordanian experts in Italy to become trainers and other components of tech-

An additional JD20,000 will be provided by local funds raised by NHF and the Salt Development Cooperation to support the Salt Handicrafts Training Centre.

nical assistance to the pro-

A committee will be established to select outstanding students at the centre from the 75 students currently studying there, an NHF spokesperson said.

Those selected will receive funds to start their own small enterprises in handicrafts, the spokesperson said.

The project, which started in 1987 and saw its first graduating class in 1991, was sponsored by a

grant of about \$700,000 from Italy from 1991 to

The Salt Handicrafts Trairing Centre offers a free three-year training programme for students who have at least finished the 10th grade and adhoc courses for the public and crafts people. The centre also provides service programme for trainers.

The first phase of the project included training in weaving and ceramics. In 1991, the centre was expanded to include a newlyrenovated building which houses a permanent showroom and two pilot production units. One is designated for weaving, and the other for ceramics-making.

The project is a product of the NHF development philosophy which focuses on long-term integrated development projects that help families and communities reach self-reliance through democratic grasaccording to the NHF.

7m tree saplings to be planted during Arbor Day celebrations

AMMAN (Petra) — In preparation for Arbor Day celebrations on Jan, 15, the Ministry of Agriculture Afforestation Department Tuesday announced that it distributed seven million tree saplings for planting.

Department Director Mousa Abbadi said that 1.5 million saplings went to individual and private and public organisations, and the rest were distributed to the Jordan Cooperation Organisation (JCO), the municipalities, public gardens, and universities. Another 1.5 million will be planted along roads by

the concerned authorities around the country. According to Mr. Abbadi,

the department plans to plant trees on 25,000 dunums of forest areas and shrubs on 20,000 dunums of pasture land this year. The seven million saplings,

he said, were grown at 12 nurseries run by the department, adding that the department is seeking to expand its afforestation programmes to all regions of the Kingdom.

The main Arbor Day celebration will take place Sunday at Wadi Araba where Jordan and Israel signed a peace treaty on Oct. 26,

Mr. Abbadi said at least 15,000 saplings will be planted at that site in a ceremony to be held under royal patronage.

Meanwhile, the Jordanian-Scandinavian Friendship Association (JSFA) Tuesday announced arrangements for tree planting ceremonies at the Scandinavian Forest near Baqaa on Jan. 20 under the patronage of Their Royal Highnesses Prince Ra'ad Ben Zeid and Princess Majda Zeid, the honorary presidents of the association.

AMMAN (Petra) — Foreign Minister Abdul future partnership between Jordan and the Karim Kabariti Tuesday discussed with EU in economic, political and cultural fields, French Ambassador to Jordan Bernard Basupport the EU will extend to Jordan, the

Pakistan and U.S. play down nuclear differences

ISLAMABAD (R) — U.S. Defence Secretary William Perry, starting a two-day trip to Pakistan Tuesday, expressed hopes for a broader security dialogue and both sides sought to play down their dispute over nuclear policy.

Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto said his visit, the first by a U.S. defence secretary for 12 years, showed that relations were developing despite a U.S. ban on military aid imposed in 1990 over suspicions about Pakistan's nuclear policy.

"Both countries have broadened the nature of their relationship to encompass other matters, particularly investment and peacekeeping cooperation worldwide," Ms. Bhutto told reporters.

"There are differences between the U.S. and Pakistan no two nations can agree all the time," Mr. Perry said in a statement after landing in the Pakistani capital from

"But I'm not here to dwell on what might be wrong in our relationship — I'm here to promote a broader security dialogue that will help us build on what's right about

During the cold war, the United States lavished military and economic aid on Pakistan, the main conduit for Western aid to Afghan guerrillas fighting Soviet occupation.

But after the Soviet Union's collapse, the U.S. Congress penalised Pakistan for nuclear weapons ambitions, which it denies, cutting off all military and new economic

Mr. Perry now faces the tricky task of persuading his hosts that Washington's expanding defence ties with India, the next stop on his four-nation tour, will not be

Ms. Bhutto, speaking shortly before scheduled talks with Mr. Perry, said the United States was no longer pressing Pakistan to sign an international nuclear nonproliferation treaty or roll back its nuclear programme

unilaterally. "As a result of our discussions over the past several months, the United States now accepts Pakistan's position that it is neither fair nor feasible for Pakistan to accept unilateral obligations and restraints." she declared.

Ms. Bhutto said Pakistan and the United States shared concern about the prospect of a missile and nuclear arms race in South Asia and would work together to promote global and regional understandings on nuclear non-

proliferation_ Mr. Perry held talks with Defence Minister Aftab Shaaban Meerani which be said would cover military cooperation as well as ways to make international

peacekeeping more effective. "One focus of my talks will be the issue of international peacekeeping," Mr. Perry said. He said the United States "greatly appreciates the extensive contributions Pakistan has made to U.N. peacekeeping operations,"

nuclear programme is peaceful. Pakistan says it has the capacity to make nuclear arms but has decided not to. It refuses to sign the nonproliferation treaty unless India does.

device in 1974 but says its

The U.S. suspension of aid to Pakistan froze the sale of 71 F-16 fighters and other military equipment. Ms. Bhutto said Pakistan wanted Washington to deliver the goods or return the \$658 milion paid for the undelivered

Asked about suggestions that the United States might find a new buyer and refund the proceeds to Pakistan, Ms. Bhutto said this was possible if the money was repaid in

"As far as we are concerned we want either the planes and other equipment, or our money back." she

Mr. Perry is the latest of several senior U.S. officials to visit Pakistan in recent months. In October, Energy Secretary Hazel O'Leary led a presidential mission to Islamabad during which American businessman signed agreements which could result in private-sector energy investments worth \$4 billion.

Meanwhile, Mr. Perry kicks off a string of visits by senior American officials to India this week as the two nations bury cold war antagonisms and try to build a powerful

new partnership.
Mr. Perry, the first U.S. defence secretary to come to India since the Soviet Union India exploded a nuclear broke apart, is to arrive in

New Delhi Thursday for a three-day visit aimed at strengthening fledgling defence ties.

He is to meet Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao. who is also defence minister as well as Home (interior) Minister Shankarrao Chavan. He is scheduled to observe a ioint army-air force exercise and visit an army training school.

Spurred by India's freemarket policies, bilateral business is booming. Last week alone, Levi Strauss, Anheuser-Busch and American Telephone and Telegraph (ATT) all announced new projects in the world's second most populous na-"U.S.-Indian relations are

growing rapidly in the economic sphere," Brahma Chel-laney of the Centre of Policy Research said. "It's apparent to both that unless political and strategic ties grow, it will be difficult to pursue economic ties."
U.S. Commerce Secretary

Ron Brown, accompanied by more than two dozen senior American business executives, is to arrive in New Delhi Sunday, the day after Mr. Perry wraps up his tour.

Ms. O'Leary is set to pay her second visit in a year in February, and U.S. President Bill Clinton's wife, Hillary Clinton, is considering a trip later in the winter, diplomats

U.S.-Indo defence relations were put on a new course with the disintegration of India's former ally, the Soviet



Pakistan's Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto (right) shares a joke with U.S. Defence Secretary William Perry during their meeting Tues-

day. Mr. Perry arrived this morning for a two-day official visit to Pakistan (AFP photo)

Gingrich asks House historian to quit

WASHINGTON (R) -House of Representatives Speaker Newt Gingrich Monday evening fired his newly appointed House historian after learning that she helped block federal funds for a school curriculum on the holocaust because it did not present views of the Nazis and the Ku Klux Klan.

Mr. Gingrich appointed the 47-year old Christina Jeffrey, an assistant professor of political science at Kenneshaw State University in Georgia where Mr. Gingrich once taught, in mid-December, but her appointment was not officially announced and became public only a few

Reports of her involvement in the 1986 incident which caused a furore in Washington and prompted at least one congressional hearing — began to surface late Monday, prompting immediate outcry from major Jewish groups and two New York

Mr. Gingrich's spokesman Tony Blankley said the speaker had left a message for Christina Jeffrey asking for her resignation, but had not yet spoken with her

directly.

Mr. Blankley said Ms. Jeffrey served on a Department of Education panel which was set up to review a curriculum entitled "facing history and ourselves," but the panel reiected a \$70,000 grant for the programme because it was not balanced or objective.

At the time Ms. Jeffrey, whose name was then Christina Price, wrote, "the prog-ramme gives no evidence of balance or objectivity. The Nazi point of view, however, unpopular, is still a point of view and is not represented. nor are the views of the Ku Klux Klan," according to the Cable News Network.

Mr. Blankley said neither Mr. Gingrich nor his staff was aware of the incident because Ms. Jeffrey had married and changed her name in the in-

"No one was aware of it," he told Renters. "Newt just learned of the incident (which happened) six years ago, and upon corroborating those facts, has asked for her resignation this evening." A White House spokes-woman said Mr. Gingrich's

move to fire Ms. Jeffrey was

prudent decision." A spokesman for the World Jewish Congress praised Mr. Gingrich for

moving swiftly on the matter. In its Tuesday editions, the New York Times quoted Ms. Jeffrey as saying Monday that she had no intention of stepping down.
"It wasn't the kind of thing
I would have said if I had

known it was going to be in the New York Times. It has never been my position that you ought to be going out and finding the KKK and bringing them into the middleschool classrooms."

Mr. Gingrich's first days as speaker have been dogged by controversy, beginning with remarks by his mother last week to CBS television in which she said her son thought first lady Hillary Rodham Clinton was "a bitch."

Monday's developments on Ms. Jeffrey were reminiscent of problems President Bill Chinton had with key appointments early in his administration after background checks failed to turn up information on their past

Hubble spots collision between 2 galaxies

BALTIMORE Maryland (AFP) — The Hubble space telescope has photographed a rare and spectacular head-on collision between two galaxies that offers new insight on the birth of star systems, NASA said. A picture taken with a Hubble camera on Oct. 16 "provides a new opportunity to study how extremely massive stars are born in large fragmented gas clouds," the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) said in a statement. The image shows the Cartwheel Galaxy surrounded by a ring-like fea-ture some 500 million lightyears away in the constellation Sculptor. The "ring world" was caused when a smaller intruder galaxy careened through Cartwheel's core, sending a ripple of energy into space, plowing gas and dust in front of it. The cosmic shockwave, expanding at 320,000 kilometres an hour (200,000 miles per hour), gave birth to several billion new stars in a ring that is so large the entire Milky Way would fit inside.

Kaunda told not to gripe about lousy car

LUSAKA (R) — Former Zambian President Kenneth Kaunda says his government car is a wreck but people who served under him are to blame, a government official said Tuesday. "The ministry will give Kaunda a new vehicle when a new fleet of cars is ordered for leaders. Until then, the former president should make do with what he has been given," Deputy Works and Supply Minister Siyoto Kunyanda said after Mr. Kaunda complained about the state of his Toyota at the weekend. The minister said the cars were inherited from Mr. Kaunda's United National Independence Party, which was ousted in democratic elections in 1991. and he said its leaders were responsible for damaging the vehicles.

Thai man marries 2 sisters

BANGKOK (R) - A Thai man married two sisters at the same time after the younger woman threatened to commit suicide if he did not also marry her, newspapers reported Tuesday. More than 500 wellwishers attended the wedding Monday of Pratuang Bamrungchiep, 28, and his two brides. Thabthim Kachabal, 18, and Aurathai Kachabal, 16, in the eastern Thai province of Chantaburi, the papers reported. Pratuang had planned to marry Thabthim but later decided to marry Aurathai as well after she fell in love with him and threatened suicide if she were rejected, the papers said. Bigamy is illegal in Thailand but the reports did not say if Pratuang would attempt to register officially both of his brides.

S. Korean Red **Cross president** knighted

SEOUL (AFP) - South Korean Red Cross President Kang Young-Hoon has received an honorary knighthood from Queen Elizabeth II for promoting friendship between South Korea and Britain. British Ambassador to Seoul, Thomas Harris, announced here Monday that Mr. Kang had been honoured for the leading role he has played since he assumed the Korean chairmanship of the Korea-Britain forum and as chairman of the Korean-Britain Society. The presenta-tion of the award of Mr. Kang, a former South Korean ambassador to London, will be held some time in February, he said.

Mother kills drug-addict son

MARSEILLE, France (AFP) — A mother shot and killed her drug-addict son Monday after he threatened her for money to finance his habit, police said. The woman, in her 60s, was arrested after calling police and telling them she had killed her son Gilles with a shotgun in their fifth floor apartment in the town of Aubagne. A spokesman sand she contacted them, and did not appear to realise she had killed her son. The young man had been taking drugs for 14 years, and had demanded money from his mother

for some time.

Sri Lanka truce holds despite rebel provocations

COLOMBO (Agencies) — A truce in Sri Lanka's civil war was in its third day with no major violations reported but senior army officers are concerned separatist guerrillas may set up bunkers in restricted areas as they did during a previous ceasefire.

Military sources said Tuesday Tamil separatist rebeis ere seen moving with arms in "no-go" zones around army camps just a day after a two-week truce began with government troops Sunday.

But they said the incidents were not viewed as ceasefire violations so as not to icoparend the island's 12-year ethnic conflict in which more than 30,000 people have

"We're not regarding them as ceasefire violations," said a senior army officer in charge of counter-insurgency operations who declined to be identified.

"We feel they could be trying to provoke us into opening fire and then blame the army for sabotaging the

Fifteen rebels were spotted Sunday night in a "no-go" zone near an army camp on the jaffna peninsula in the

They left after a rebel leader and an army commander discussed the incident over radio links established between the two sides to monitor the truce.

Military sources also said

SAN FRANCISCO (R) -

Parts of California's wine

country were turned into

huge lakes Monday as rivers

swelled by three days of rain

burst their banks, flooding

dozens of houses and forcing

hundreds of people to evacu-

Scores of stranded resi-

dents in the Guerneville area

north of San Francisco had to

be flown to safety in military

helicopters as the flood wa-

ters rose around their houses.

fell on his truck in Carmel

Valley, 100 miles (160 km)

south of San Francisco, offi-

The Monterey County

Sheriff's Department said re-

cent heavy rains apparently

caused the tree's uprooting.

An estimated 500 to 1,000

people have been evacuated

so far in northern California

-- and there may be more to

come, said Kati Corsaut of

the state office of emergency

"There's a good chance

more areas will be flooded

cials said.

services.

another report was received of 30 boats moving 50 metres outside the navy's main base in the north at Karainagar, also Sunday.

Rebel fighters bearing arms were seen Monday in a village in the northeastern Trincomalee district, in violation of the ceasefire deal which says the rebels can come into villages only without their weapons.

On Monday, a military spokesman told Reuters he believed instructions on how to observe the truce had probably not yet reached rebel fighters in the field.

The incidents reported by the military could not be independently confirmed or checked with rebel sources.

Under an agreement signed by President Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga and Tamil rebel leader Velupillai Prabhakaran last week, government and rebel troops were to maintain current ground positions, keeping a minimum of 600

metres between each other. Military sources said their bases were still within range of rebel mortars and light weapons despite the "no-go"

zones around the camps. "We're worried the Tigers could build bunkers and strongpoints just outside the "no-go" zone and use them to attack us if the ceasefire breaks down," the senior

army officer said. That is what government forces say happened after a break in the previous truce

Floods cause havoc in California wine country

from April 1989 to June 1990. The current truce, so far without the supervision of local or foreign peace moni-tors, came into force at midnight Saturday in a major step towards ending the

separatist war. It followed an initial agreement between government negotiators and rebel representatives during a second round of talks in Jaffna.

In a third round of talks Saturday both sides will review the truce, decide on its extension and discuss a 40 billion rupee (\$816 million) rehabilitation plan.

Canada, Norway and the Netherlands have agreed to send two representatives each to serve as chairmen on committees monitoring the

Meanwhile, Sri Lankan authorities finalised elaborate security arrangements Tuesday for the forthcoming visit by Pope John Paul II, offi-

cials here said. The capital Colombo will be brought under an unprecedented security blanket using half the 60,000-strong police force backed by troops

and para-military units, offi-The Pope is scheduled to arrive here on Jan. 20 and leave the following day after the beatification of Father Joseph Vaz, a priest who had worked in Sri Lanka over 300

years ago. "We have now finalised plans for the visit as well as ments," said an official who attended a security meeting Tuesday. "All police units in and around Colombo have been placed on maximum alert.'

The government in this mainly Buddhist country has declared a holiday for the two days of the Pope's visit, partly to keep the huge office crowds out of the city.

Meanwhile, police reported a minor arson attack Tuesday on a Roman Catholic Church outside the capital but said it was not related to ongoing protests from the Buddhist clergy against the Pope's visit.

"Indications are that the attack was a result of some sort of a private enmity involving people connected to the church," a police officer in the area said.

The country's Buddhist dergy has threatened to boycott the Papal visit, alleging that the Pontiff's latest book, Crossing The Threashhold Of Hope, maligns

Buddhism. Construction work is underway at a sea-front promenade where the Pope will conduct a high mass. Police said the area would be cordoned off at least four

days before the visit. We have asked two hotels in the vicinity to provide us with their guest lists so that we can screen people occupying rooms overlooking the Galle Face Green (where the mass will be conducted)." a other security arrange- police spokesman said.

Fire rages on at Indian oil rig

NEW DELHI (AFP) - An inferno raged on for a third day Tuesday at an oil installation off the southern Indian coast after destroying a drilling rig in one of the country's worst oil well disasters, officials said.

The fire, which broke out was described by officials in the state of Andhra Pradesh as "awesome and unique," the Press Trust of India (PTT) said in a dispatch from the state capital Hyderabad.

"It may take 10 days to 40 days to cap it," an official of the Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) told the news agency.

"We have already com-

menced the first phase of exercise to clear the debris within 500 metres.

The ONGC, India's biggest oil exploration agency, was seeking technical help from an unidentified U.S. company with expertise in handling such disasters, PII

Intense heat within 300 metres of the burning installation prevented person-nel of the ONGC from reaching the Bay of Bengal site off the coastal district of Kakinada, the news agency

Disaster control equipment was moved to the district from other oil centres in India while 5,000 people living

near the coast were evacuated as a precautionary measure, said ONGC Manager Rangarajan.

The disaster caused no casualties and no damage to the environment is feared, Mr. Rangarajan was quoted as saying by PTL. The situawell inder contro and there was no cause for

panic," he added.

The \$3-million drilling rig at the site has, however, been destroyed by the fire which erupted 10 minutes after the gas blow-out.

It was one of the worst disasters at an Indian oil well, and a million cubic metres of gas (35 million cubic feet) was being burned daily.

U.S. to scrutinise aid to Africa

WASHINGTON (R)-U.S. Assistant Secretary of State George Moose said Monday aid to Africa would come under close scrutiny following calls for cuts in foreign aid from Republicans who have taken control of Congress.

But Mr. Moose, the senior State Department official responsible for Africa, said he believed a high level of assistance would be maintained. provided the government was able to convince Congress of its effectiveness.

"I remain convinced that we will be able to convince... the people in this country, broadly, that the actions and activities that we are engaged in represent a significant investment for the United States." he said.

Mr. Moose said the United States spent a total of roughly \$3 billion in Africa in 1994, including aid, involvement in peacekeeping operations and democracy-building initiatives. This included a development fund of just over \$800 million

Several conservative Republicans, who swept to power in Congress for the first time in 40 years last November, have urged deep cuts in foreign aid as part of efforts to trim expenditure and balance the U.S. budget.

Among them was Jesse Helms, incoming chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee which has a major say in directing U.S. aid. He has said much U.S. aid has "gone down foreign ratholes to countries that

constantly oppose us." Mr. Moose, who faces tough negotiations to maintain African aid at its current level, conceded that this was "a time for resource restraints... in every country around the world."

He warned African states there would be a rigorous check on the effectiveness of U.S. investment in the continent, which faces a raft of ethnic and political conflicts undermining efforts to develop and sastain democra-

The debates with sceptical members of Congress would create an opportunity "to examine precisely how well we are doing and to explain and justify that," he said.

The goal of U.S. involvement in the continent was to create a more secure international environment and more trading and investment opportunities for Americans,

He also said there was a "broad constituency of support in this country for internationalism" and said Americans, proud of their comtry's role as a "beacon of democracy and freedom". would respond generously to Africa's needs.

He said during 1994 there had been democratic progress in some cases, notably South Africa but also Mozambique, Malawi and the Central African Republican, but there had been severe setbacks, as in Rwanda, Gambia and Sudan. He said lessons from the

year included the need to improve organisations coping with the continent's problems, including the United Nations and the Organisation of African Unity, and for the United States to work more closely with European countries to avoid duplication in assistance programmes.

New White House spokesman debuts

WASHINGTON (AFP) -The new White House spokesman Michael McCurry marked his first day on the job Monday vowing to revamp President Bill Clinton's much-maligned media relations office.

"We're going to change some things about the way we do business," Mr. McCurry said relaxing in his office armchair during the informal briefing. "I know there's a lot of excitment in the press office about doing things dif-

The White House is hoping McCurry's appointment will improve the image of its communications staff, who are generally young and inexperi-

The 40-year-old former State Department spokesman and Washington insider was tapped last week to replace Dee Dee Myers, who was often criticised for not being well enough informed.

Ms. Myers, 34, was the first woman to serve as White House press secretary and she has complained that she was not given the access to the president and his top aides necessary to do her job.

Mr. McCurry told the White House press corps he would do his best to turn

things around. "I want to know what the president thinks and the administration is thinking," he said, promising to be "consistent with my obligations to answers."

Mr. McCurry said he would not give a formal briefing before next week.
I recognise how much I don't know," he said. "I spent so much time in foreign affairs that I didn't pay much attention to the other sub-

The lovial new press secretary said, however, he was looking forward to the

iects."

Governor Pete Wilson declared a state of emergency in four of the worst-hit northern California counties, enabling them to get state disaster assistance. Hernandez's had to evacuate their home due to The storms claimed their 17, carry their belongings across a flooded flooding as the weather service expects more first victim Monday when Highway 12 in Sebastopol, California. The heavy rains through the week (AFP photo) garbage truck driver Jimmy and we'll have to evacuate." ed out power to 40,000 Ruiz Medrano, 25, was killed by an uprooted tree which she said.

In Los Angeles, Mayor Richard Riordan declared a local state of emergency Monday in light of initial damage reports from recent storms and predictions of

more to come. "I am taking this precautionary measure to activate the city's emergency operations organisation...,"

Heavy rains pounded northern California for a

third day as a new Pacific

storm reached land. Gale-

force winds and rains knock-

homes in northern California and forecasters said stormy weather could continue until

Sonoma and Napa counties - the heart of California's wine industry --- were among the areas worst affected. The most serious flooding was around the pictureque

Sonoma County town of Guerneville, 50 miles (80 km)

north of San Francisco,

where the Russian River

reached 15 ft (five metres)

above flood level at one stage

Local officials said the floods were the worst in the region in nine years, as bad as the disastrous floods of 1986. In some areas, there was

water as far as the eye could

water and many roads were unpassable Many vineyards were submerged, but since the vines are now dormant the damage may not be bad, local radio

see, its surface broken only by the roofs of houses and the tops of trees. Dozens of houses were flooded, abandoned cars were filled with ferently. remorts said.

PAY. JANUARY II.

of energy into space, he case and dust in home gending at 320 Allometres an how () miles per nours, gareh Severa, billion new new Markey Way would in a Kaunda told no to gripe about lousy car

LUSAKA (R) - h Zampian President & Kaunda says his gover Car is a wrack but people served under him a blame, a government said Tuesday The me will mie Kaunda a Ber; cle when a new flest de ondered for leaden; then, the torner an should make so with as nas treen given. E Works and Supply NE Sivere Nunyanda sati Mr. Kachila tomples continues and of his Tathe weekens There said the can were w from Mr. Kaundars National Independen! the warran was one to idemioeratio elections: and he said its leafresponsible for date

Thai man marries 2 siste

BANGKOK(R) + 0

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Mother kills drug-addict 5011 A R S E I L E Fill
A mother shot
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Monday after he finant ter for money to find habit police said in her ok arrested after caling for her son Gilles in the lost Aubume. A spokesmin contacted them self-ton appear to realise them self-tone appear to realise them self-killed her son, taking the man had been taking the for 14 years, and had self-ded money from his man

and money from his pa

GROZNY, Russia (AFP) — The presidential palace in Grozny, the symbol of Chechenya's independence bid from Russia, has been reduced to a blackened, bullet-riddled hull like much

of the rest of the city. But outgunned and outnumbered independence leaders remain holed up inside the 11-storey building determined to carry on with their fight against the Russian

Reaching the palace itself, located in the centre of the city is no easy feat.

One drives through potholed streets littered with the carcasses of burned-out cars and buildings with gaping holes from shelling before acceding to the palace.

The front of the building is devoid of its front door and windows and the top four storeys have been blasted

The only remnants that remind visitors of the building's

The ground floor appears abandoned except for the 20 or so Chechen fighters stationed at various spots and shooting sporadically at some

unseen target. After going down a dark stairwell into the basement one reaches the heart of the

The underground floor, which has electricity, is the headquarters of Asian Maskhadov, the commander of the rebel troops. Inside is a communications centre, a kitchen and several rooms where soldiers are resting.

Mr. Maskhadov, who was interviewed by two AFP reporters who took advantage of a lull in fighting Tuesday to reach the headquarters, sits in front of a small table laden with a map of Chechenya and several walkie-talkies, nervously playing with a small

Stacked next to him along the wall are boxes filled with ammunition.

"They have destroyed half of my city, thousands of people are dead, villages have been levelled and they talk of a ceasefire," he said, referring to Moscow's announcement of a ceasefire Monday

Mr. Maskhadov is not very talkative when asked to discuss Russian troop positions inside the capital saying only that his troops are able to move about within a large area of the city.

He is even more evasive when questioned on the whereabouts of Dzhokhar

the tiny oil-rich republic, saying, after a long pause, that Mr. Dudayev is near the palace."

As he talks, some of his troops go back and forth reporting on the situation.

On the way out of the headquarters is Omar Makhassakhanov, the deputy head of Chechen Special Forces. He has abandoned the sword which he said gave him strength, and adjusts his white flak jacket before heading out to rejoin the

Outside the shelling has resumed and the artillery fire is increasing. The only means of leaving the palace will be aboard a tank driven by Andrei, a volunteer from Belarus, who shuttles back and forth transporting back-up troops from behind the battle

Norway tells Russia to respect arms treaty

OSLO (R) — Norway, concerned about its own security, said Tuesday it had told neighbouring Russia it must respect a landmark treaty on cutting conventional armed forces in Europe.

Russia wants revisions to the Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) treaty, which provides for sweeping cuts in military hardware from the Atlantic to the Urals.

Because of problems in Georgia, Nagorno-Karabakh and now Chechenya, Moscow has complained the treaty puts too strict a limit on the heavy weapons it can deploy in the ex-Soviet Union.

But Norwegian officials told Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Georgy Mamedov in Oslo last month that they opposed any changes to the treaty, Foreign Ministry spokesman Ingvard Havnen

"The CFE treaty is very important for reducing tensions in Europe," Mr. Havnen told Reuters. "This is

Trade unionists and left-

day's Guardian newspaper

signed by 32 Euro-MPs, just

over half Labour's contingent

in the Strasbourg parliament.

urged the retention of the

Totemic Clause 4 of Labour's

Mr. Blair, whose party en-

joys a huge opinion poll lead

over the Conservatives, Mon-

day repeated his pledge to

replace Clause 4. Labour's

commitment to nationalisa-

tion of key industries dating

But it is now clear he will

have to battle against party

members who fear that his

attempt to modernise Labour

could leave it bereft of a

clear, radical image and

alienate its traditional voters.

Diane Abbott, left-wing

member of Labour's policy-

making National Executive

Committee, said Mr. Blair

was guilty of an "attempt to

bounce the party into some-

. . . .

The transfer of the contract o

Backing the Euro-MPs.

from 1918, with a new state-

ment of aims and ideals.

servative rule.

constitution.

why Norway is opposed to any changes. This is about our security interests. Any erosion of the treaty would be very unfortunate." The Norwegian position

added a voice to growing concerns in the West and among Moscow's former satellites in Eastern Europe about any Russian attempts to tamper with the treaty. signed in 1990 by NATO and the now-defunct Warsaw Pact.

A Western diplomat said last week the Russian army had moved considerable equipments into Chechenya and was "well in excess of

what the treaty permits." Daily Aftenposten said Oslo was afraid any concessions to Russian on treaty ceilings in the south would leave Norway without guarantees against a potential Russian buildup in the north. A founding member of NATO, Norway is the only alliance member to share a

threaten Russian reforms and burden relations with Western countries.

> ter Joergen Kosmo said the end of the cold war had by no means created peace, citing the conflicts in Bosnia and Chechenya as examples of a new instability.

> Defence-Discussion Club, Mr. Kosmo said Norway's security cooperation with the United States had grown more vital now it will stay outside the European Union. He said Norway's rejection

of EU membership in a reterendum on Nov. 28 meant it had no say in the expanded 15-member bloc and its fledgling defence arm, the Western European Union (WEU).

tant that Washington realises that the challenge in Europe varies, that defence-related issues in Norway are different from those on the European continent," he said. The United Setates, as

part of a post-cold war drawdown of military forces in Europe, has reduced the bases earmarked for accepting allied reinforcements in the event of a crisis. This measure has caused concern

Mr. Kosmo said Norway had to safeguard its political cooperation and military agreements with the United States which forms the military backbone of NATO as a security guarantor for Nor-

For decades the opposing superpowers sought supremacy in the strategic Arctic the base of Moscow's mighty Northern Fleet is just east of Norway on the Kola Peninsula.

Krajina Serbs refuse to meet Rose

ZAGREB (Agencies) — Breakaway Croatian Serbs Tuesday refused to meet U.N. Bosnia force commander, General Sir Michael Rose, who was to have visited them in Knin, the centre of their self-proclaimed Krajina republic, inside Croatia, a U.N. spokesman said here.

"The meeting was cancelled last night due to the RSK (Serb Krajina Republic) army officers. They decided not to meet with us," Paul Risley said.

Gen. Rose was to have discussed the conclusion of a local ceasefire between the Krajina Serbs and Bosnian government 5th Corps forces in Bihac enclave, a Muslimheld pocket surrounded on all parts by Serb forces, including from those just across the border inside Croatia.

A senior U.N. official, who refused to be named, said Krajina Serbs had cancelled the scheduled meeting because Gen. Rose was to have discussed the problem of trucking in military supplies to the Bihac enclave for U.N.

Bangladeshi soldiers there. The 1,100 Bangladeshi peacekeepers in Bihac enclave have only light weapons and a few armoured vehicles. the Krajina Serbs having closed their checkpoints into the enclave shortly after they deployed last autumn.

Gen. Rose was also to have discussed the withdrawal of Krajina forces from Bihac where they have been helping Bosnian Serbs and rebel Muslims fight government

The Krajina Serbs have denied having any troops inside Bosnia and have said they are not concerned by a truce agreement signed Dec. 31 between the Bosnian government and breakaway Bosnian Serbs. The truce agreement calls for the withdrawal of all foreign forces from

Gen. Rose last month vainly sought to visit Knin after travelling to the northwestern Bihac pocket. Bosnian Serbs promised

Tuesday to reopen supply roads into Sarajevo this week to revive a ceasefire agreement stalled by bickering a demilitarised zone near the capital.

The pledge was given by an aide to Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic despite Serb insistence that Muslimled government troops have not pulled out of the zone.

"Despite the fact that the muslims keep refusing to withdraw their forces from the illegally-occupied ground on Mt. Igman and Mt. Bjelasnica, the Serbs are... going to open up the routes for civilian traffic in and out of Sarajevo by the end of the week," Jovan Zametica told the Bosnian Serb News Agency (SRNA).
The issue of withdrawal of

the government army from the Mt. Igman demilitarised zone around Sarajevo has stalled a four-month cessa-

tion of hostilities accord signed by the opposing sides

on New Year's Eve. Mr. Zametica said Serbs were reopening the roads "to save the four-month agreement... but also to ensure that humanitarian aid is reaching all the innocent civilians in this terrible war."

The Serbs had refused to reopen the vital supply routes until Muslim forces left the demilitarised zone.

Serbs briefly reopened the routes last year, giving the 380,000 residents of the besieged Bosnian capital a taste of a more normal life. Supplies started rolling in, forcing exorbitant food prices to

Gen. Rose told Bosnian Army chief General Ratko Mladic at the weekend that Muslim-led forces had vacated the zone. But the U.N. could not

verify the withdrawal Monday when a Bosnian guide refused to lead them to the last known hideout, arguing it was unsafe to travel on foot in the deep snow.

The U.N. was planning to send another foot patrol Tuesday to check the one last lookout point. A helicopter sweep of the zone was also scheduled if weather permit-

U.N. spokesman Major Herve Gourmelon told Reuters Bosnia's fronts had remained quiet over the past 24 hours with just eight confirmed ceasefire violations — alone and one involving both

He said the Bihac enclave in northwestern Bosnia was calm overall with only a few small bursts of gunfire near

Bihac town. There was "sporadic military activity" around Velika Kladusa, north of Bihac, Monday, U.N. observers counted 13 artillery explosions and 50: small arms bursts overnight up to daybreak Tuesday.

The Bihac enclave has been one of the few areas in Bosnia to see fighting since the truce came into force on Jan. 1.

The truce was intended to pave the way for talks on an overall peace settlement to end the 33-month-old war in Bosnia.

Officials of the five powers trying to broker a settlement met in Paris Tuesday to discuss ways of consolidating the fragile ceasefire and relaunching peace negotiations.

Officials of the so-called contact group of the United States, Russia, France, Britain and Germany met to hear a report by U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Richard Holbrooke, just back from Sarajevo.

Mr. Holbrooke encountered bitter criticism from Bosnian Prime Minister Haris Silajdzic Monday after saying the contact group's peace plan was a starting point for new negotiations.

Balladur looks set for clean election sweep

PARIS (AFP) — One hundred days ahead of France's presidential elections. Prime Minister Edouard Balladur Tuesday appeared the unassailable favourite to win as a campaign by arch-rival Jacques Chirac failed to take off.

The prime minister, who has yet to formally declare his candidacy, is riding high in opinion polls with more than 60 per cent support while giving the impression he is

above the fray.

But 62-year-old neoGaullist leader Chirac, who began an unofficial campaign for the presidency a year ago and formally declared his candidacy in November, has failed to impact on public opinion despite numerous television appearances and campaign meetings during which he has accused the current government of "conservatism" and "immobil-

Mr. Chirac went in fists flailing, but like a shadow boxer made no contact, and on Tuesday Mr. Balladur was able truthfully to claim that "in spite of everything," his government enjoyed "the support of the majority of the the prime minister's official

Mr. Balladur also claimed his government was "the most reformist for several dozen years" in France and had introduced "profound changes" since it came to office in March 1993 after the formerly ruling Socialists

were crushed in legislative

elections.

Aides say the 65-year-old Balladur, a member of Mr. Chirac's Rally For the Republic (RPR) party, will announce his candidature later this month, with the most likely date being Jan. 19.

But the prime minister will continue his tactic of staying above the scrum, the aides said, and avoid direct campaigning for at least another Mr. Balladur plans to

announce his campaign platform only at the end of February or early in March, his aides said, and his campaign team led by four cabinet ministers will not immediately move into the fivefloor campaign headquarters that have been discreetly rented a stone's throw from

In the meantime, Mr. Balladur will focus on convincing voters he is busy governing the country, the aides said. On Tuesay he made a point of announcing plans for weekly ministerial meetings to discuss European Union

France is president of the EU until June and fears have been expressed that the election campaign will distract the Paris government on Tuesday Mr. Balladur insisted that the French EU presidency remained the government's "grand objective."

Mr. Chirac's objective is meanwhile to try to force Mr. Balladur into battle at a time when the latest poll by the CSA institute gave 67 points to the prime minister against 3 for the Gaullist leader.

The latter firmly believes the electorate's stae of mind is not shown by opinion polls but by the reality of elections, and cites such shocks as the 49 per cent "no" vote in the Maastricht treaty referendum in September, and a combined "protest" vote of 60 per cent in European elec-

The withdrawal of potential Socialist candidate Jacques Delors last December at

a time when the outgoing European Commission chief topped the presidential opinion polls meant that Mr. 221ladur no longer faces a threat from the Socialist Party. The only thing that could run out of control is France's

political corruption saga, Lich could yet deal a blow to the Balladur image, analysts said. Three of his ministers, all

of them supporters of Mr. Balladur in his rivalry with Mr. Chirac, have already been forced to resign in affairs of corruption and illegal political party financ-

ing.

A candidacy by former centre-right Prime Minister Raymond Barre, 70, could also spoil the cards for Mr. Balladur.

Corruption-wise, Mr. Barre is "clean." He has a reputation as a plain speaker and was recently praised by outgoing Socialist President Francois Mitterrand as among the "most capable" of running the country.

U.K. expels top Russian TV journalist

LONDON (R) — Britain has asked a senior Russian television journalist to leave the country on national security grounds, an Interior Ministry spokesman said Tuesday. Alexander Malikov, 43,

who works for Russia's Ostankino Television Station, was given 28 days to leave the country in a letter dated Jan. 4.

"His presence is not conducive to the public good for reasons of national security, the Interior Ministry spokesman said.

This is the stock phrase used by British government officials when referring to expulsions for spying. He declined comment on the precise grounds for expulsion.

The Russian Intelligence Service denied the charge. "Reports saying that Malikov is a member of staff of Russia's intelligence are not true," Russian news agency Interfax quoted Tatyana Samolis, Moscow press secretary of the Foreign In-

telligence Service, as saying. Britain's News of The World newspaper carried a story Sunday in which Mr. Malikov denied any involvement in spying activities.

It said Mr. Malikov had interviewed Prime Minister John Major before Mr. Major's official visit to Russia in February last year. "I'm a well-known face on

Malikov as saying. "I have met John Major and all the top British politicians, as well as Boris Yeltsin and the top Russian politicians." No-one was answering the phone Tuesday at Mr. Mali-

exclusive part of West Lon-An official at the Foreign Press Association said she had heard that Mr. Malikov

had already left the country. The Interior Ministry spokesman said this was the first expulsion of a Russian iournalist "in recent times." He could not be more pre-

The last Russian to be ex-Moscow for the same reason. Dr. Martin McCauley, a

pelled from Britain for spying was an unnamed diplomat, kicked out in April last year shortly after Russia told a British diplomat to leave

specialist in Russian politics

risked being expelled from Moscow. Russian TV," it quoted Mr. "In the present climate, while Russia is fighting a losing war in Chechenya and the Foreign Ministry has

been very aggressive, I think it's almost inevitable," he kov's home in Kensington, an In a separate development. seventeen years after a

Bulgarian dissident was assassinated in central London with a poison-tipped umbrella, Britain said Monday it was stepping up pressure on Russia to hand over information on the incident.

Georgi Markov, a broadcaster who was working for the BBC World Service Bulgarian section, was killed in 1978 as he waited for a bus on London's Waterloo Bridge in sight of Big Ben and the British parliament buildings.

The murder weapon was an umbrella tip spiked with

The spectacular murder quickly became a classic

School of Slavonic Studies, chapter in the cold war hissaid it was "almost inevitable" that the Russians tory books but the mystery of that the Russians exactly who killed Mr. Marwould retaliate - meaning kov and why was never some British journalists solved.

Seeking to lay the matter to rest, Foreign Office Minister of State Baroness Chalker told the House of Lords (upper house) she was ready to raise the issue again in Moscow after past requests for information went unanswered.

"We have asked them for an explanation of why it is taking so long." Baroness Chalker said.

"Whether they are seeking to avoid responding, I cannot tell you for certain at the moment," she said. "We may have to raise the level at which we make the repre-

sentations." A list of 15 murder suspects, all past and present officers of the reviled KGB security service, has been compiled by Scotland Yard's anti-terrorist squad, said Baroness Chalker.

'We have asked the Russians to establish the whereabouts of these persons and whether or not they will willingly talk to the police," she

at London University's Spain opposition unmoved by Gonzalez GAL denials

opposition parties Tuesday dismissed as unconvincing and ineffectual denials by Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalez of official involvement in a "dirty war" against Basque separatist guerrillas in

The centre-right Popular Party (PP) demanded that Mr. Gonzalez call general elections by May at the latest to end what has become the most serious and far-reaching political crisis in Spain's 12

Charges of government in-

volvement in the activities of the anti-terrorist liberation group (GAL), which killed 27 alleged Basque separatists from 1983 to 1987, have seriously shaken Mr. Gonzalez' minority government and sent financial markets nosediving.

Each new wave of press allegations has battered Spain's financial markets, sending the bond and stock markets plummeting and knocking the peseta to an all time low against the German

A tense and unsmiling

Gonzalez told a television interviewer Monday night: "I never authorised, covered up or tolerated the actions of the GAL. I have always condemned any action that was not legal.'

He said he had no intention of calling general elec-tions as he still had the support of Catalan allies in parliament and the real situation

of the Spanish economy was one of steady improvement. PP leader Jose Maria Aznar branded Mr. Gonzalez's interview as unconvincing and "pathetic," while the PP

Ruiz Gallardon said Mr. Gonzalez had been "forceful but unconvincing." Sen. Gallardon told interviewers on a radio discussion

Senate spokesman Alberto

programme Mr. Gonzalez should call general elections by May at the latest when nationwide regional and municipal polls are scheduled. "That is not the ideal mo-

ment - we think elections should be called immediately. But given that there already exists an electoral date in May, that is the latest possible moment.

A Chechen fighter hides from suiper fire in a building across the square from the presidential palace destroyed by Russian artillery and bombardments in Grozny Tuesday

Grozny palace remains symbol of resistance away by shelling. Three other floors were destroyed by fire.

> illustrious past are its standing marble columns.

breakaway republic's resistance movement.

Norwegian Foreign Minister Bjoern Tore Godal Monday condemned the "brutal behaviour" of Russian troops fighting rebels in Chechenya, saying the conflict could

Separately, Defence Minis-

In a speech at an Oslo

economy in Europe.

ley, said.

Mr. Blair wants Labour to The expulsions technically focus in 1995 on three main wiped out Mr. Major's majority in the House of

powers to the European Un-

border with Russia. "For Norway it is impor-Britain's Blair faces row over constitution plan

thing that it does not really want." LONDON (R) - Tony Blair, who has ridden a wave Some union leaders attackof popularity since being elected leader of Britain's ed Mr. Blair for failing in an interview Monday to commit opposition Labour Party six months ago, faced harsh real-Labour to renationalising ity Tuesday as deep splits Britain's railway system appeared over the party's which the Conservative gov-Socialist creed. ernment is in the process of

privatising. Lew Adams, general wingers joined Labour memsecretary of the Train Drivbers of the European Parliaers' Union, said the union ment to rally to the defence of traditional Socialist values constitution committed it to which Mr. Blair is attempting fighting for a Socialist societo jettison in his bid to end ty. "So I can't support him, more than 15 years of Concouldn't trade off and my heart is with Clause 4." Mr. An advertisement in Tues-Adams said.

> within the party ahead of the resumption of parliamentary business after the Christmas break later Tuesday. Michael Meacher, the partv's transport spokesman, said: "I don't think it will be a serious embarrassment. There is genuine and real debate about the manner in

Mr. Blair loyalists tried to

minimise the disagreement

reformulated." Prime Minister John Maior, who has faced damaging splits over the European Union among his own Conservatives, was expected to attempt to exploit Labour's newly exposed fissures.

The attack on Mr. Blair by

his Euro-MPs came at an

embarrassing moment. The

which Clause 4 should be

Labour leader was due in Brussels Tuesday evening to make a keynote speech on European policy. Newspaper commentators

said Mr. Blair, who has been

careful over the past six months to avoid policy commitments which could be turned against him by political opponents, must now paint a clearer picture of what Britain under a Labour

government would be like. "Prudent silence is no longer even a tactical option. We need to know who and what this is, suddenly bestriding Britain," Hugo Young wrote in the Guardian.

Meanwhile Mr. Major

faces another gruelling year hoping the booming British economy will float him off the political rocks. Mr. Major, who does not have to call a general election for more than two years, is counting on a period of quiet. competent government to allow rising living standards and the promise of eventual

tax cuts to win back disillusioned voters. Mr. Blair will use the platform of a "fairness for Britain" agenda to cement his yawning poll lead by portraying Mr. Major's Conservatives as out of touch and beholden to vested interests.

issues - halting rail privatisation, opposing the government's plans to stop mortgage help for homeowners who lose their job. and curbing excessive pay for bosses of privatised utilities. "In these and other areas

of public concern, it is

Labour that will speak up for

the mainstream majority in

Britain," Mr. Blair said Monday. "As we continue to put the positive case for Labour. the government can expect no let up on our opposition to The Conservatives im-

spotlight back to Britain's track record as the strongest "He (Blair) is playing grievance politics and is not addressing the real issues such as the success of our economy and the way in which unemployment is coming down rapidly." the par-

mediately tried to switch the

ty's chairman, Jeremy Han-"He is going for three small populist issues and trying to build a whole agenda round that. That just isn't

good enough." The outcome of this clash of political visions could depend largely on how quickly Mr. Major makes peace with eight Conservative rebels who were kicked out of the parliamentary party before Christmas for defying him on a key vote to boost British payments to Europe. A ninth dissident later resigned in dis-

Commons. Mr. Major held out an olive branch to the rebels Sunday, praising them as true-blue Conservatives and vowing to oppose a further transfer of constitutional MADRID (R) — Spain's

the 1980s.

years of Socialist rule. mark.

By Dr. James Zogby

Jordan Times

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Addressing the nuclear threat

ALTHOUGH THE agenda of the U.S. Secretary of Defence William Perry during his latest visit to Israel included the subject of the proliferation of nuclear weapons in the Middle East, there appears to be no breakthrough on this very controversial issue. Looming ominously in the horizon is the prospect of Iran acquiring or purchasing nuclear bombs and Israel's determination to strike at Tehran's nuclear facilities to forestall its acquisition of military nuclear capability. Israel's military strategists have long clinged to the notion that given Israel's small size and small population, it will have to rely on mass destruction weapons to secure itself from military threats from its neighbours, which now include far-away countries as Iran and, perhaps, even Pakistan.

Against this backdrop, Egypt and other Arab countries that have the potential of developing or acquiring nuclear bombs have refused to ratify the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) unless and until Israel does the same. Cairo has also refrained from becoming a party to the treaty outlawing the possession or development of other mass destruction weapons, like biological and chemical arsenals.

For Jordan, the situation is quite clear given the agreement between the Kingdom and Israel under the terms of their recently ratified peace treaty to work diligently for the purpose of securing a nuclear free Middle East. Against this backdrop, there is a o need to devise a regionally accentable formula to get rid of the threat of nuclear or other mass destruction weapons. There is an ongoing multilateral committee emanating from the peace process to accomplish exactly that objective. We subscribe to the proposition that there can be no genuine peace in the area as long as the security needs of all the countries in the region are not addressed. The way to attain this goal is to renounce the use of mass destruction weapons of all forms and to rely on a more same policy to provide security for all the countries in this part of the world. This should entail Israel's ratification of the NPT with the Arab side ratifying the other treaties dealing with chemical and biological mass destruction weapons on a quid pro quo basis. in the final analysis, though, the real security for all the parties in the area is to attain a full and comprehensive peace and establish a genuine peace culture. Insecurity, after all, is deeply imbedded in the mind, and as long as there are mutual fears and anxieties, no amount of legal commitments to peace would do the necessary job.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

TAHER AL Adwan, a columnist in Al Ra'i daily, sai Tuesday that the inclusion in the new government of 17 deputies means that Sharif Zeid would not find much difficulty in handling matters related to, or connected with, Parliament. The writer expected the new prime minister to be in harmony with Parliament since his colleagues in the government represent different parliamentary blocs, especially in matters related to the peace process, the fiscal budgets reconciliation. He said that the present government is also qualified to deal promptly with internal issues like unemployment and to stimulate the national economy since it groups qualified and capable members. In the writer's view, the government faces a major task of winning the confidence of the public and creating comfortable atmosphere that is more helpful towards creating new jobs, encouraging investment and spreading the spirit of optim-

MAHMOUD RIMAWI criticised Israel for demanding that the Arabs reduce their forces and end their armament programmes while it continues to arm itself to the teeth with conventional as well as mass destruction weapons. The writer said in a column Tuesday that the Israelis have refused Egypt's call that it signs the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty but continues to accuse Iran of building nuclear weapons. While demanding that the Syrians reduce their armament and end Hizbollah's attacks on northern Israel, Tel Aviv is determined to hold on to the occupied Syrian heights and the Lebanese territories, added the writer. While issuing threats against Tehran for trying to possess nuclear arms. Israel is paving the ground for a strike against Iranian installations, something which could trigger a wide scale war in the region, said the writer.

Washington Watch

1995: So far, the year of Gingrich

DURING THE past six weeks, incoming Republican Speaker of the House of Representatives Newt Gingrich has dominated the U.S. media.

Like a disciplined field marshal executing his battle plan, Mr. Gingrich has seized the initiative on every front. He as restructured Congress, named new committee chair-n, defined and prioritised the issues and set the agenda the first day and the first three months of the new

It is interesting to note that throughout this massive undertaking, Mr. Gingrich has faced little internal opposition to his mandate to direct the new Republican majority in Congress. That Mr. Gingrich is far from being the most senior Republican in the Congress has never seemed to matter. And while the Republican Party is not unified, Mr. Gingrich's brand of confrontational conservatism is now the dominant trend in the Congress (especially among the large group of newly elected Republicans); and so for now Mr. Gingrich's control is uncontested.

What is equally interesting is that despite Mr. Gingrich's success in defining a national agenda and displaying a real leadership in taking control of Congress, his personal standing among the public and the press is quite low.

Immediately after the election, while the Speaker-to-be was still riding high on positive press coverage, one national columnist warned that the very media that was elevating Mr. Gingrich would soon turn against him (as it has in the case of most recent major political leaders). When that change did occur, the columnist warned, Mr. Gingrich would sink in popularity and lose his grip on the

To some extent, that change has taken place: a number of critical articles and exposes have appeared which treat the Republican leader to harsh and unflattering commen-

tary — but he has been unfazed by the attacks.

It is fascinating in this context to watch a Gingrich encounter with the press. He defines the agenda. As the press "pack" (like a "pack of wolves)" inundates him with questions about his agenda, he simply turns them away. The Gingrich ground rules seem to be: he'll only answer

the questions he wants to answer and discuss only the topics he has come before the press to discuss. And the Speaker has not hesitated to scold the press publicly for what he has described as their unfair effort to define issues themselves and not accept the definitions given to events and issues by political leaders.

For example, after emerging from the White House last week after what both Mr. Gingrich and President Bill Clinton described as a "positive" and "cooperative" exchange of views, the media pressed the Speaker to discuss the differences that divided the White House and the Republican Congress. Instead of accepting this "bait," Mr. Gingrich rebuked the assembled press for ignoring the description of the meeting as "cooperative." His firm rebuke apparently worked, since it forestalled further questions on that subject.

Mr. Gingrich's approach seems to be based on a recognition that his power is derived from his party's victory in the elections, his ability to lead Congress and set the daily legislative agenda. He understands that his personal public standing and his relationship with the press will, over the long term, be determined by his ability to win legislative battles and to continue to define the agenda, and

not the other way around.

It is this self-confidence that contributes to Mr. Gingrich's leadership ability. He has been planning this Republican takeover for over 20 years. While other Republicans were content with their minority status, Mr. Gingrich planned an issue-oriented campaign to achieve a Republican majority. His lecturing across the country, his video tapes, his political fundraising and his political interventions have helped in the victorious campaigns of many of the new members of the Congress not only in this past year but in several previous election cycles — so much so that many of these Republicans are known as "Gingrich

And while I personally feel that much of the Gingrich message and many of the items on the Mr. Gingrich agenda are wrong headed and, if implemented, would lead the U.S. down the wrong path — his is the only clear, coherent and self-confident programme that has been offered to American voters in the past decade.

In a nutshell, the conservative view of Mr. Gingrich is that government has become intrusive and a burden. He calls for a taxpayer rebellion that will limit the role of government in people's lives. Ignoring the essential role that government has been called on to play in ending racism, the effects of racism, in meeting the crisis of urban decay and enduring poverty — Mr. Gingrich and his movement have attracted the support of angry white, principally male voters who feel paradoxically both threatened and ignored by the social programmes of the

By saying "the liberal press be damned," Mr. Gingrich appears to be saying, "we have the voters, we control Congress — that's the source of power." And it is this self-assurance and the simplicity of his message that has carried the national debate.

In comparison with the performance of the White House during the same six week period, Mr. Gingrich appeared as the model of principled leadership that inspires confidence

The president faces a more difficult set of circumstances than the Speaker. He leads a party that is in disarray, shell-shocked by its November defeat, and a party that is

From the beginning, Mr. Chinton had a difficult time winning Democratic support for his agenda. His first legislative effort — the Economic Stimulus package of 1993 — was defeated despite a Democratic majority in Congress. Even the president's later victories, on the Budget and Deficit Reduction Bill and the Crime Bill of 1994, were so diluted by compromises (made to win reluctant Democratic votes) that his leadership was always in question. Mr. Clinton's health care and campaign reform proposals never really stood a chance for the same reason: the failure of Democrats to support their leadership.

Today, the same Democratic Party that fended between its liberal and moderate wings over who was responsible for Mr. Clinton's victory in 1992 — which was really a debate over which direction the party should go in Mr. Clinton's first two years in office — is once again engaged in a vitriolic debate over which wing of the party is responsible for the losses of 1994.

Party moderates, headed by the Democratic Leadership Council (DLC), claim that the losses came because the president and his party have been too liberal and, therefore, lost white male support and with it the 1994 elections. Liberals, headed by the liberal congressional leadership and the more liberal National Rainbow Coalition of the Reverend Jesse Jackson, counter that Democrats lost because the party abandoned its traditional bases of African-American and unions.

The liberal wing of the party makes a better case. In fact, most of the Democrats' congressional losses in 1991 were experienced by moderate DLC members. And in elections, such as the victory of Senator Chuck Robb in Virginia and Senator Dianne Feinstein in California, it was the black, Hispanic and labour votes that were decisive.

There is a real debate over the changes that are taking place in U.S. society. Changes in technology and employ-

ment patterns (that have resulted in factories closing and making obsolete several formerly productive sectors of the economy), changes in population patterns (white Americans leaving the nation's cities and moving to the South and West or the farther suburbs), and the instability in the world resulting from the end of the cold war, and the changes in social mores — all of these have combined to produce anger and alienation and a volatility in the voting

It was reaction to these changes that brought Ross Perot to prominence. It was Bill Clinton's message of hope that responded to this voter insecurity that brought him victory in 1992. And it was Newt Gingrich's message of frestration with the failure of government that helped bring about the Republican sweep in 1994. While Republicans have found a coherent message in the Gingrich "Contract with America," Democrats are still debating how to respond and how to redirect their message to win back voter

And within this debate lies part of the president's dilemma. He leads a party of at least two, and at times innumerable, wings, with each wing competing for both loyalty and attention and neither willing to compromise or even silence its public criticism of the other. In a real sense, the Democratic majority in Congress during the past two

years wasn't a majority at all.

The same lack of unity plagues the Republican Party at times, but not within its congressional delegation. The divisions that exist among Republicans will not become a factor in the national debate until the 1996 presidential campaign starts to heat up later this year. It will be then that the party's moderate and conservative wings will clash. For the time being, however, the path is clear for speaker Gingrich to lead his Republican revolution in the House of

Mr. Gingrich will succeed in passing much of the promised "Contract with America." This "contract" is a rehash of Reagan Republican doctrine: tax cuts, "trickle-down economics (tax breaks for wealthy Americans and large corporations in hope that the resultant benefits will "trickle down" into the economy to create economic growth and jobs), increased defence spending, nishment-centred anti-crime legislation, and severe cuts

in a wide range of social programmes.

While it is expected that the "contract" will pass in the Gingrich-led Congress, its fate is not so certain in the more moderate and deliberative Senate. Already, Senate Majority Leader Robert Dole has expressed reservations concerning both the "contract" and Speaker Gingrich's con-frontational style of conservatism.

Some Democrats, and even the president himself, have now come out in favour of some aspects of the "contract," though they are trying to frame it in terms more acceptable to Democrats. For example, they are promising tax breaks for "middle class" Americans, those earning under \$75,000 a year - while the Repblican "contract" defines "middle

class" as those earning under \$200,000 a year.
For now, it appears that Mr. Gingrich has no plans to delay or compromise on his agenda; and it will, most probably, pass unimpeded through 1995. He will pass most probably the programme though it much passes become law. The of his programme, though it may never become law. The Senate will modify or block much of the House Speaker's effort, and the president will veto parts that he finds

Until these obstacles emerge, however, Mr. Gingrich will lead. How the Speaker will react to challenges to his programme remains to be seen. But it is clear that his bold challenge to the president and his control of the national debate will be one of the defining characteristics of 1995 and will help to set the issues debate for the 1996 elections.



Rabin on ropes at mid-term

By Robert Mahoney Reuter

TEL AVIV - Halfway through a term in which he has won a Noble Peace Prize and shaken the hands of more former Arab enemies than any previous Israeli prime minister, Yitzhak Rabin is on the ropes. If elections were held today, Mr. Rabin's Labour Party would be trounced. Mr. Rabin's opinion poll

ratings have dipped below those of opposition Likud Party leader Benjamin Netanyahu, who is better known among Israelis for his mastery of the television "sound bite" than for cogent alternatives to Labour's peace plans.

Disappointment about the slow pace of peace with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), continuing Islamic militant attacks in the streets of Israel, rising inflation and taxes, a tax on stock market profits and a public perception of an administration stuck in the mid-term doidrums, have sapped sup-

Internally, Mr. Rabin's Labour Party is in ferment as the young guard jostle to succeed the 72-year-old for-

mer general. Externally, the paper over the cracks in his coalition government with leftwing parties is beginning to peel thanks to what they call an ambivalent policy over Jewish settlement of

the occupied West Bank. The liberal Israeli press has also started to turn on the man they once portrayed as the only one tough enough on security to be trusted to negotiate the transfer of the West Bank and Gaza to PLO leader Yasser Arafat.

Former virtues are now vices. Toughness is seen as masking brittleness. Haaretz newspaper, bastion of the liberal left, has carried pieces accusing him of being isolated and tired, surrounded by bad advisers, and not delegating enough.
"We are in trouble," said

one Labour Party and government member who asked not to be identified. "We are even making Bibi (Netanyahu) look good. All he has to do is keep quiet."
"The old stories that

Rabin cannot make a decision, that he wavers under pressure, that he cannot delegate power, all these are coming out again. We have to counter them," the source said.

Labour's narrow 1997 election victory was punned on the personality of Mr. Rabin, a no-nonsense native "sabra" who, because he captured the West Bank.

Gaza and the Golan Heights as army commander in 1967, could be entrusted with negotiating their future.

Reports by historians that he almost cracked under pressure in 1967 and the political scandals and charges of incompetence that brought down his only previous administration in 1977 were swept under the carpet in 1992.

Mr. Rabin, boistered by the politically wily Shimon Peres, swept away a Likud Party fattened by 15 years in power and took Israel into talks with the onceoutlawed PLO on a waferthin parliamentary majority. Any doubts about his personal competence to lead will be crucial for the next election, due by November 1996, when for the first time the prime minister will be elected directly, rather like an executive president.

"Even without the polls the situation is very shaky," said Hebrew University political science professor Avraham Diskin. "The starting point for Labour is that in the last election most people voted for right-wing parties. It is only because of 'surplus votes' (one of the mechanisms of Israel's proportional representation system) that the left wing got in," Mr. Diskin said.

Likud voters who swung to Labour as well as many right-wing Labour voters are disillusioned with the peace process. Israelis' own sense of personal security has also been undermined by mounting Islamic suicide attacks such as the Tel Aviv bus bomb which killed 22 people and the bomber in

"Expectations that the peace process was going to end our troubles were too high," Mr. Diskin said. The bombings and shoot-

ings coupled with polis week after week showing Labourt dropping from 44 to about 37 seats in the 120-seat Knesset, put Mr. Rabin in a dilemma. Should be accelerate the

implementation of Palestinian self-rule and talks with Syria in the hope of solid progress by 1996 or slow the transfer of authority assuring Israelis that Palestinians will control the West Bank only once they have improved their security re-

Some political commentators believe Mr. Rabin still has time to pull political and economic rabbits out of the hat for 1996.

"We have still almost two years to go," said Foreign Minister Peres, one man who could yet save or sink Mr. Rabin. "It is a long time in politics."

LETTERS

Road safety — issues to be tackled

I READ, with great interest, the remarks made by His Majesty King Hussein on the appalling conditions of the roads in our country (Jordan Times, Dec. 27). It is truly regrettable that the King, with all his duties and pressing demands on his time, has to remind us of this important issue. As an ordinary citizen, I would like to suggest the following measures with a view to improving and upgrading the standard of road safety in this country:

 The highway code must be strictly enforced and applied across the board to all drivers and vehicles with no exceptions (i.e. army, government).

— The concerned authorities need to review the existing

procedure for obtaining a driver licence, particularly for drivers of public vehicles: taxis, buses, shared taxis etc. - A procedure to evaluate each driver on a points/ endorsement system should be adopted - this is already common practice in many countries. This system should deal promptly and effectively with violations of traffic regulations, such as going through a red light, speeding in residential areas and failing to indicate when required. If a driver accumulates X points over Y period, then his/her

driving licence should be suspended for one year. - Public awareness is the most important issue and it should start at home, where we, as parents, should educate our children about road safety. This work needs to be reinforced at school, and no child should be frightened to

tell the bus/taxi driver to slow down.

— There should be stiffer penalties in force for those drivers who cause injury to other people and/or property, due to reckless driving.

I drive across Amman every day and what worries me most are the new 26-passenger type buses which race to get past each other. How can they get away with it? There should be far stricter vigilance of speeding bus drivers, as they are not only putting their own lives at risk, but also those of their passengers. We have already witnessed two fatal bus accidents in the course of a few months late last year, both causing great loss of life.

Let us all hope that 1995 will herald in a new era of road

safety awareness, with the concerned authorities and the general public working together to improve the standard of driving on our roads. Only then will the tragic loss of life, caused by irresponsible driving, become a less prominent feature in our daily newspaper.

The Jordan Times welcomes letters and contributions from its readers on any subject they wish to tackle. Letters | intended for publication, however, should contain the writer's full name and preferably address as well. Names can be withheld only upon request and under special circumstances. Letters are subject to editing. The newspaper is not responsible for the return of unused manuscripts.



The third lane

By Ica Wahbeh

JANUARY II, 198

Dr. James Zogby

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A CLUB, called the third lane, should be established in Jordan. Its members would be exclusively those car drivers who prefer to use the lane on the right of wide roads or highways, which is usually the band reserved for relatively slowmoving vehicles everywhere in the world. The proposed club should not concern itself with the use of single-lane roads. That should be left entirely to the Traffic Department and everyday drivers to deal with. The new club members' only concern should be how to whizz along their favourite third lane, where it exists, unperturbed by the snails on the left who, at 40 km/hour, think they are at

the races. So, followers of the new entity could rally around a manifest demanding the mayor to pay extra special care to the right lane which is also the most dilapidated. Besides the patchwork of tar-scars left behind from repeated excavations to lay telephone, electricity, water, maintenance lines the lane is also used by pedestrians — whose walk-ing pattern, if seen from above, would look like that of an enabriated person due to the uninspired placement of trees on the side walk.

Now, if the club would come into being, with prop-er lobbying and financing, its members could really thrive and reach their destination faster than anybody else.

Just imagine! You tail the

car in front. You politely wait for the driver to realise that you need to overtake, but he/she, oblivious to the outside world, stubbornly and purposefully continues the itinerary with the desperation of someone who fears the road would be taken from under the car's wheels if it veers one inch. Then, perhaps, depending on the habit, you might blow your car's horn or flash its headlights. Usually these tricks do not help. So what do you do? Obviously

resort to the "third lane." It sounds ideal, smooth and easy. And it usually is. Just watch the traffic flow. The right lane is, as a rule, free of traffic, meaning car traffic. It could easily be converted into a cart, bicycle or donkey lane, as things stand now.

Not that we do not sympathise with the plight of a right-lane driver in times of rain, snow or construction activity when the manholes overflow, the lane becomes a tricky rapid, the engine can stall or the sand could make the car overturn in no

But normally, and after the club is founded and repair works are done to perfection, the lane is the best thing that could hap-

pen to any driver. Of course the Traffic Department will have to closely cooperate with its members and amend some of its regulations, but that will be worth the effort.

The writer is a member of the Jordan Times', editorial

Israel-PLO talks in 'crisis'

(Continued from page 1)

ing to grant residents of East ment which was supposed to Jerusalem the right to vote have taken place before July and reject our proposal for a 13 under the 1993 declaration 100-member council. They of principles for self-rule.

want a smaller number, but The Haaretz newspaper they haven't suggested a fi- said the plan would be for a gure," Dr. Erakat said.

Dr. Erakat said the Palestifor an election monitoring committee consisting of four built-up areas where joint judges from Egypt, the Uni patrols would be mounted ited States, Russia and the with the Palestinian police. European Union.

Israel has insisted on joint have to be found for each ing of the elections.

Dr. Erakat, who is also no longer disagreed over the opposition groups in the elec- of 120,000 Palestinians.

"It is a Palestinian affair and we are not supposed to discuss it with Israel," adding that "all Palestinians aged over 18 may take part in the elections.

Since talks on holding elections began in October the Israelis have been calling for Palestinian groups opposed to the peace process and which call for the destruction of Israel to be barred from

the poll. Israel and the Palestinians are also at odds over the release of Palestinian prisoners and the linkage between the long-delayed Palestinian elections and the redeployment of Israeli troops in the

West Bank. Israel radio said Tuesdav Mr. Rabin will for the first time propose an Israeli army redeployment on the West Bank when he meets Mr. Arafat next week.

Mr. Rabin would show Mr. Arafat a map of a planned pull-back from Palestinian towns to allow for elections to be held for an autonomy council, the radio said, quoting a senior official.

However, the report gave timetable for the redeploy- agreement."

staged redeployment.

The army would leave thian delegation handed the Bethlehem, Jenin and a third Israelis a document calling unnamed town but would maintain a presence in other "A specific answer will

Israeli-Palestinian monitor- West Bank town," the daily Under the proposal, the

Palestinian local government army would however remain minister, said the two sides in control of Hebron, where several hundred lewish setparticipation of Palestinian tlers live right in the middle Police commander of the

West Bank Eli Ron revealed Tuesday that the force was readying to adjust its deployment in the territory according to the army pull-back. Mr. Rabin in December

offered a temporary redeployment, with troops returning to the towns after the ballot. The Palestinians rejected the proposal.

The Jerusalem Post reported that a basic understanding had been reached on the principle that the army will not redeploy outside all Palestinian areas.

But differences remained over the precise areas, the daily said.

"În the end it will all boil down to specific pieces of geography," a senior official

"Arafat has come around to accept that Israel will not redeploy everywhere," he

"But the difference between him and Rabin is this - Arafat says redeployment should occur everywhere, except in specific problematic areas. Rabin says the reverse - redeployment should not ne details of the scale or occur except in listed areas of

Chechens marshal forces

(Continued from page 1)

The first of the f members of the local Chechen community to discuss the conflict. He said in a statement that a peaceful relation had to be found during the ceasefire period.

Mr. Chernomyrdin was

The state of the s charged by President Boris Yellala dest week to explore take the Chechen conflict, but on condition that Chechenya end its three-year secession from Russian which sparked the conflict.

But Oleg Lobov, secretary of the Russian security council which is masterminding the Russian strategy in Chechenya, warned that the "disarming" of the Chechen rebels would have to con-

Viktor Chernomyrdin met tinue after the ceasefire. Both Mr. Chernomyrdin and Mr. Lobov denied criticism that the ceasefire was in fact an ultimatum to the Chechen rebels to surrender because, they said, the Chechens were being offered

an amnesty. Meanwhile, the Russian Duma (lower house of parliament) was due to hold an extraordinary session on Wednesday to debate the Chechen crisis for the first time this year.

Among the motions on the agenda was one to ban military intervention in Chechenya, and another to give the parliament more in-fluence over the executive.

War coverage under Russian fire

Reporters are trapped in a minefield of state censorship, writes Sophia Kishkovsky

WHEN RUSSIAN forces carried out their most intense daytime bombing raid on the Chechen capital last month, the Russian state television correspondent Mikhail Zotov reported on the grim tableau of burning vehicles and blackened

Although he was asked to transmit his material to Moscow by 7:15 p.m., Zotov said the stalled until the beginning of his network's 9 p.m. news broadcast to slip it past the editors, who have the responsibility of protecting the gov-ernment's interests. "If we had sent it earlier, it never would have been shown. he said.

Russian journalists covering the war between Russia and Chechenva find themselves fighting a government campaign against the press that harks back to the days of Soviet rule. Zotov and others face a daily flood of disinformation, attempts at censorship, and threats to end the media's hard-fought independence.

State-run news agencies were told last week that they were "obliged to pro-vide the official point of view of the government" in addition to other sources, while the Interior Ministry accused journalists of slandering servicemen and endangering their lives by publishing secret information about the Chechen

In a televised speech recently, President Boris Yeltsin made the unsubstantiated charge that "Chechen money" was behind some mass media in Russia. Despite requests from Russian journalists, Mr. Yeltsin's office has refused to release any evidence to support his charge. Russian troops posted in Chechenya have greeted

some correspondents by fir-

ing at their cars or over

their heads. On Thursday,

while the defence minister. Pavel Grachev, was promising that journalists would now be welcome to visit military units in the field, a correspondent with the Russian television news programme Vesti reported that he was shot at by Russian troops.

"The behaviour of bureaucrats in regard to the mass media has been horrible," said Otto Latsis, a veteran political commentator for Izvestia, one of Russia's most influential national newspapers. They're not only threatening to take their money and licences, but they're not providing any information... Instead, they tell

Izvestia has led the print media by covering Russian involvement in Chechenya when it was a cover, intelligence operation. But television has been the most daring in its coverage. The Independent Television Network, or NTV, has brought the war into Russians' homes. Its footage of bombed-out Grozny, anguished civilians and hapless soldiers has angered the government, which threatened to revoke NTV's licence.

News broadcasts on Ostankino, the larger of the two state TV channels, have become a litany of official propaganda. Viewers are assured that the 'bandit formations" in Chechenya are being liquidated and "constitutional order" is being restored to the relief of "grateful" Chechens. Programmes have portrayed Chechens as ruthless criminals.

"Of course they check the programmes — they have censorship here," said Zotov, who recalled that some of his most graphic footage had ended up on the cutting room floor. "I assure you that there is

things worse," said Viktor Kuznetsov, the deputy director of the Ostankino news division. "We don't show, the most frightening things which our corresponno pressure put on corresdents see - corpses and

nel carrier

pondents. But one of our

principles is, don't make

other horrible things - so as not to traumatise the

Yegor Yakovlev, who as editor of the liberal weekly newspaper Moscow News and later as head of Ostankino was in the vanguard of the struggle for a free press,

A Chechen fighter in the presidential palace watches troops outside climb aboard a captured Russian armoured person-

warned that democratic gains were being eroded. "Events (in eastern Europe) in 1989 gave rise to the name 'velvet revolution'," said Yakovlev, who was fired as Ostankino chief by Mr. Yeltsin last year for "bad political leadership."?

"This is a velvet dictatorship, because we're allowed to talk about freedom of speech and human rights. But a velvet dictatorship can't last forever. Something has to happen."

Africa needs rich nations help on Rwanda plan

By Buchizya Mseteka Reuter

NAIROBI -- A Rwanda crisis plan devised by regional African leaders. needs the support of rich nations if it is to succeed, diplomats and analysts said. A summit meeting of leaders of seven African

states - Burundi, Rwanda, Uganda, Tanzania, Kenya, Zaire and Zambia — have agreed the plan in the wake of Rwandan genocide and the exodus of more than two million refugees.

The leaders, chaired by Kenyan President Daniel Arap Moi, agreed that suspected perpetrators of last year's genocide must be separated from innocent refugees in camps in Zaire and Tanzania if there is to be peace in Rwanda.

They also agreed that safe corridors from the refugee camps to the Rwanda border and safe transit points inside Rwanda must be set up to enable the refugees to return home. Political analysts said that

the formula would mean little unless it was backed by an international peacekeeping force with real muscle. Regional observers said none of the seven African states is able to provide such a force. They poured scorn on an offer by Zaire to provide 2,500 troops to do the job.

"That is tantamount to internationalising thuggery. Zaire has Africa's, if not the world's, most undisciplined, chaotic and corrupt army. How could it be trusted to do the job?" a Western diplomat told Reu-

The observers also said such a force would be vastly outnumbered by the 30,000 troops and 10,000 militiamen loyal to Rwanda's defeated Hutu government who control the main re-

fugee camps in Zaire.
"You need a reputable international force, a well financed force, a force with real teeth to back the kind



Rwandan children in a refugee camp in Mogadishu (AFP

of formula the leaders agreed upon," a European diplomat added.

A recent United Nations plan to raise an international force to enforce order in the teeming camps appears to have died because of a shortage of funds and of

volunteer contingents.
But Zaire's Prime Minister Kengo Wa Dondo was emphatic his country's army would be able to do the job and allow Rwandan refugees to return home.

We shall start the job of detecting those who intimidate, those who exert pressures and exactions and believe me this organisation will allow us to uncover them and render them harmless," he told Reuters in an interview.

Diplomats also said it was necessary for the new Rwandan government, set up by a Tutsi-dominated army, to create conditions of peace and reconciliation inside the country in order to persuade the suspicious Hutu refugees to go back

"Much can be done for Rwanda - but without reconciliation between the (majority) Hutus and (minority) Tutsis, such efforts would be a complete waste of time," an Ugandan government official at the

He added: "It is an illusion for one group to think it can rule without the other group. The two must come together - only then shall we see lasting peace in that country.

Rwandans speak the same language and share the same names and religion. Yet for decades an obsession with ethnicity has frequently boiled over into massacres by the two groups.

Analysts also pointed to the absence from the summit of President Mobutu Sese Seko of Zaire and raised doubts about any implementation of the plan without his endorsement. Zairean officials gave

to fill out the same papers conflicting explanations for twice or more. Mr. Mobutu's absence. Some said he was mourning a dead nephew but Mr. Kengo told Reuters he was playing host to Angolan President Jose Eduardo are mostly the poor and the desperate. Dos Santos at his jungle

palace. Mr. Mobutu's full backing is needed to bring the refugee camps in eastern Zaire under control and stop cross-border attacks into Rwanda.

Egyptian bureaucrats have ways to make you wait

By Samial Nakhoul

CAIRO - At one counter a woman was filing her nails, another sat behind a rickety desk fixing her makeup and combing her hair, others just gossiped or read newspapers.

In mid-morning the staff gathered in a corner to eat falafel sandwiches and drink their tea. At Muslim prayer time, twice a day during working hours, they went to pray, leaving hundreds of people unattended.

This was not a beauty parlour or a cafe but the living embodiment of Egyptian bureaucracy, a stalinesque concrete block in central Cairo known simply as al-mogammaa — the com-

Here civil servants, in a style stretching far back to the Ottoman and maybe the Pharaonic past, have perfected the art of making the possible impossible for the general public.

Here Egyptians and foreigners wait in the semblance of a queue for hours to obtain a document or have one signed. Often, when their turn

comes, the civil servants divert them to another counter, or turn aside to deal with something else, or demand that extra elusive document the applicant does not have, did not think of or was not told about. Applications are put away without any filing and are often lost. It is the norm

The well-off can spare themselves the hassle by sending messengers with a baksheesh (tip) for those in charge. Those in the queues

Some of the civil servants apparently do not work at all, sitting at empty desks all day, while a small minority fend off the clamouring crowds. Unofficial estimates say the average

Egyptian bureaucrat does 27 minutes of real work a

day, "Public sector employees just clock in and clock out. Thousands wait behind doors until the clock strikes 3 p.m. to leave. Hundreds are hired to make tea and do nothing else," said a foreign official who works in the bureaucracy.

"There is no real accountability. Ninety-five per cent of the employees find a way of doing nothing," he said.

Antiquated manual methods do not make their task easier or more efficient. Without computers, the civil servants copy out by hand every detail from passports and other forms. Heaps of application papers pile up next to yellowing registration files, all dumped on old desks, squeezed onto dusty shelves or crammed higgledy-pig-

gledy into drawers. "It's pure bedlam," said Hani Hassanein, looking around him. "They drive us crazy until

we get our papers done. They make us suffer. They send us from one counter to another... go here, go there, come back tomorrow, next week... see the officer."

"They give us hell. Each day we spend here is like a year. They are spongers and parasites, they are lazy and incompetent. They can never do things on the spot. They make you come and go until they exhaust you." said Samira Hammouda.

Etaf Shehata, a 30-yearold Palestinian teacher with a relatively simple transaction to accomplish, knew her story by heart well before she came even close to success.

"My brother and two sisters have their residence permits registered on my mother's passport but when my mother got a new passport the officer who did it did not transfer them. He dropped them. So we need to register them on my

mother's new passport. This is the old passport, please make it like this.

"Please, please, for God's sake I've been coming here and waiting for weeks like this. I've been here all day."

"Well, you will be spending another week like this." answered the man behind the counter. "So what do you want exactly? Don't speak so fast and tell me the problem again." And off he sent her to

another counter. Four hours later, after many parroted explanations, several setbacks and two visits to the section head, there were sighs of relief all round and the teacher rushed to pay and get out.

"We're closed for today," said the cashier. 'Come back tomorrow. We don't accept applications or cheques after 12." He ignored her argument that it was two hours to closing

The complex may be the pinnacle of Egyptian bureaucracy but the picture is much the same throughout the plethora of government departments and huge state-owned enterprises.

In decrepit offices, underemployed workers sit on top of each other. In some cases 30 people are hired to perform a task that only five could do.

Graduates wait for years for the low-paid jobs the government guarantees them. The government says it has to keep on unnecessary workers and hire new young ones, or risk public discontent.

"Bureaucracy in Egypt is a social welfare net. People within the bureaucracy do absolutely nothing," said a foreign official.

"Nobody wants to rock the boat, but you have to take risks to end bureaucracy. What is true in Egyptian bureaucracy is that some traits of bureaucracy worldwide are taken to ex-

Actual foreign investment in China soars, contracts fall

BELING (AFP) - Actual foreign investment in China soared 38 per cent in 1994 over the previous year to \$27.7 billion, a report said Sunday, revealing that the value of new contracts had however fallen sharply.

Contracts signed last year were worth \$68.1 billion. Xinhua quoted ministry of foreign trade and economic cooperation official Liu Zhiren as saying, acknow-ledging a fall over 1993 but

giving no precise figure. Contracts worth more than \$100 billion were signed that

The official was nevertheless upbeat about the results. pointing to an improvement in the quality of new projects. Most of the 41,000 items approved last year were large industrial projects, particularly focusing on energy, transport and other infrastructure facilities, while speculation in real estate was basically curbed," Mr. Liu was quoted as saying.

While the success of Chinese efforts to shift the focus on investment has played a part in the falling value of contracts since the first quarter, foreign economists say the trend also reflects the credit crunch here and a waning of the China investment euphoria of recent years.

investors are now becoming more aware of the obstacles to doing business here and reassessing their esti-mates of the Asian giant's potential.

Chinese officials have said the fall has also resulted from moves to clamp down on "false foreign devils" — Chinese companies that set up abroad in order to reinvest here and enjoy preferential policies reserved for foreign-

Meanwhile, China is to expand its network of statelevel economic zones, with inland provincial capitals to their villages.

join 32 cities in coastal areas that have set up such foreign investment havens, a report has said.

The director of the Office for Special Economic Zones. Hu Ping, said all inland capitals would be permitted to set up state-level Economic and Technical Development Zones (ETDZs) as long as their prospects for attracting foreign investment looked good, the China Daily Business Weekly reported.

The existing zones have absorbed \$7.5 billion from abroad since the establishment of the first ones 10 years ago, the newspaper said, adding they contributed 5.3 billion yuan (\$616 million) to state coffers in 1994 while receiving only 2.2 billion yuan in low-interest state

If provincial-level ETDZs are included, such zones account for 20 per cent of the \$80 billion of foreign funds that have come to China since the country launched its economic reforms in 1979, it

The report did not include figures for the five coastal Special Economic Zones that were China's earliest showcases for economic reform, offering — like the ETDZs — preferential treatment to foreign investors.

Foreign experts have criticised China's zone policy, saying the focus on coastal regions has helped areas which alrea have natural locational advantages and have far less need of special incentives to attract foreigners than inland provinces.

While planning to boost the number of state-level ETDZs, China has moved in the past year to restore order and save much-needed agricultural land by abolishing many illegitimate zones, many set up by farmers hoping to attract investment to

Japan, U.S. reach financial services agreement

TOKYO (AFP) - Japan and the United States reached an agreement on financial services Tuesday as Prime Minister Tomiichi Murayama prepared for talks in Washington with President Bill Clinton.

The agreement, announced by Finance Minister Masayoshi Takemura in Beijing, requires Japan to liberalise pension funds, investment trusts, cross-border financial transactions and securities activities, the finance ministry said.

The accord, part of a bilateral economic framework drawn up in the middle of 1993, also requires the United States to improve the environment for foreign banks and securities companies. Mutual measures are

also included. "The agreement is very significant not only for Japan-

also for the liberalisation of international financial transactions," Mr. Takemura said in a statement released by the ministry.

"It is very significant for the two countries," he added. The accord followed a telephone cail Tuesday between Mr. Takemura, currently visiting China, and the acting head of the U.S. Treasury, Frank Newman. "I am very pleased that the final agree-

Mr. Takemura said. "Japan is actively proceeding with the deregulation of the overall economy and we will steadily and sincerely implement the latest decision," he added.

ment could be reached now,

The announcement came only hours after Mr. Murayama left for Washington on his first visit to the United States since assuming office in June last year. Under the agreement.

Japanese public pension funds are to be opened to investment advisory companies as early as April, the finance ministry said.

The ministry also said that investment advisory companies would be allowed to deal with national mutual funds and a mutual fund operated by Nippon Tele-graph and Telephone Corp. (NIT) during the fiscal year starting in April.

Japanese trust banks and insurance companies are cur-rently the only financial institutions allowed to manage public pension and mutual

Among other measures to be taken by Japan, the minimum capital requirement for investment trusts of 300 million ven (\$3 million) will be removed and replaced with a minimum net asset requirement of 50 million yen.

clarify procedures used to define what securities actually are as well as simplifying cross-border financial transactions, especially in the area of Eurobond issues and offerings of samurai bonds.

The United States is required to improve its treatment of foreign banks and securities companies operating on its territory and assure that foreign banks are given national treatment, the ministry said.

The mutual measures call for both countries to maintain transparency in administrative procedures, strengthen the application of anti-monopoly laws in the area of financial services and avoid the use of numerical targets.

"The two countries will use objective criteria and not numerical targets to assess the implementation of the

Japan has frequently balked at the idea of using numerical trade targets, leading to the collapse of the framework negotiations in February last year during a visit to Washington by then prime minister Morihiro Hosokawa

The financial services agreement virtually ensures that the summit between Mr. Murayama and Mr. Clinton Wednesday will be free of the usual bickering over trade, leaving the two leaders to concentrate on other aspects of the relationship.

Japan and the United States have already announced plans to revive stalled talks on automotive trade this month and expect to reach an accord on Japanese government purchases of foreign computers some time this week.

Dhaka to continue reforms despite political crisis

DHAKA (R) — Bangladesh's Finance Minister ... Saifur Rahman said Tuesday the government would keep ... going with economic reforms despite the political turmoil

in the country.

"Financial reforms, trade liberalisation and fiscal re forms will continue and be pursued vigorously despite the present political impasse. he told a visiting International Monetary Fund (IMF)

Bangladesh has heen badly shaken by a long-running political dispute over opposition demands for early elections under a neutral caretak-

er government. Mr. Rahman said there might be some delay in the process of reforms because of strikes and blockades planned by opposition parties.

Bangladesh has been praised for achieving macroeconomic stability. containing inflation at about two per cent and raising foreign exchange reserves to more than \$3 billion.

The government of Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia also managed to cut down unproductive expenditures and provide 36 per cent of development fundings from domestic resources in 1993/94 (July-June), according to official figures.

U.S. economic relations but Bank of Spain intervenes to support the peseta

LONDON (AFP) - The Bank of Spain intervened to support the peseta at about 87.90 pesetas to the mark after it had fallen to an historic low point of 88 pesetas in a climate of panic, dealers said

bere Tuesday. The intervention, which consisted of selling marks for pesetas, then pushed the Spanish currency back up to about 87.10 pesetas to the mark. The peseta was being traded at 86.52 at the close in

London on Monday. The peseta has declined sharply since Wednesday when an interest rate increase by the Bank of Spain was badly received by the market. "People are panicking about the peseta," said Peter

Wood, a dealer at the Bank of Boston. "There are rumours of Spain pulling the peseta out of the exchange rate mechanism (ERM), but I can't really see why they would do that as it is still well within its ERM fluctuation bands,"

Since the reform of the European monetary system (EMS) in August 1993, the neseta in common with the other European currencies within the ERM, has a 15-per cent fluctuation limit. It is allowed to fall to 91.91 against the mark.

The currency is falling victim to political tension in Spain where Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalez failed to reassure investors Monday evening when he denied government involvement in the right-wing GAL anti-terrorist group, which operated against ETA in the 1980s.

Dealers said resignation by Mr. Gonzalez would have been welcomed by financial markets because it would have ended political uncertainty.

At Midland Global Markets, analyst Ken Wattet said that there was likely instead to be "a period of protracted political uncertainty," something which financial markets were unlikely to take well.

Jobless to be Russia's biggest problem, minister says

MOSCOW (R) - Unemployment in Russia is more than three times the official figure and will soon be the country's greatest social problem, Labour and Employment Minister Gennady Melikyan told ITAR-TASS

news agency.

Around 1.5 million people in Russia are officially reg-istered as unemployed, but Mr. Melikyan said the real figure was around 5.1 mil-

If one added the 4.8 million people on unpaid leave or part-time work the figure rose to almost 10 million people — or 13 per cent of the

indication of what was to come, he said. "The minister is worried

about the excessively quick rate at which hidden unemployment is becoming real. He thinks this could lead to a sharp increase in social ten-sion and confrontation," TASS said.

Top officials, fearing a possible social explosion, have frequently given gloomy forecasts of joblessness. They say closing factories pushes unemployment up and triggers social unrest in regions dependent on a single em-

once bankruptcy laws start to bite, bundreds of thousands of people working in inefficient plants and enterprises will lose their jobs. Mr. Melikyan said a whole

series of measures had to be taken to deal with the rise in ioblessness. Unemployment benefit had to be boosted and the federal employment service should step up its retraining programmes.

Meanwhile, Russia had a trade surplus of \$20 billion

last year from a surplus of \$15.6 billion in 1993, the Russian external economic relations ministry estimated.

Sweden introduces belt-tightening budget

STOCKHOLM (R) -Sweden introduced a belttightening budget Tuesday with the first major cuts to the country's famous welfare state to try to tame a fastgrowing state deficit and

Finance Minister Persson, unveiling his first budget since a Social Democratic government took office in September, announced cuts to child benefits and unemployment allowances and in virtually every area of

government spending. The biggest savings would come from the social affairs ministry — 8.4 billion crowns (\$1.1 billion) by 1998 — but even the Swedish king will have to save as the royal

MORE ROOT BEER

MONSIEUR FLYING ACE?

Peanuts

Andy Capp

HOW ARE YOU

SON?

NOT SO GOOD

Mutt'n'Jeff

family's allowance is reduced.

"We now have a unique chance of using an economic upswing to stabilise central government debt and thereby bring Sweden into a good economic path," Mr. Persson

"If this opportunity is not taken now, when the next slowdown comes we risk being forced into very painful changes in the Swedish welfare state," he added.

Mr. Persson unveiled 21.7 billion crowns (\$2.9 billion) in spending cuts in the budget. A mixture of spending cuts and increased taxes would raise 114.2 billion crowns (\$15.2 billion) by

HEY, CHARLES.

YOUR DOG'S

HERE IN OUR

KITCHEN AGAIN.

financial deficit to seven per cent of gross domestic product (GDP) from 13 per cent

> Economists however said the budget was too little too

Sweden has been left with a huge mountain of debt of around 1.3 trillion crowns (\$173 billion) after pumping large amounts of money into the welfare state in the 1970s and 80s.

"The budget is as good as anyone could expect. There are no tax increases. Persson has delivered what he promised in full," said Keld Holm, economist in Lehman Brothers in London.

HE SEEMED

HUNGRY 50

NOT MANY COPPORTUNITIES

PROPOUTS, EH

S'RIGHT-I'VE DECIDED TO GO TO WORK TILL I CAN FIND SOMETHING

I GAVE HIM

SOME FRENCH BREAD..

"But this is not enough. There's no limit to what the market-wants to see. The market sees itself as having a religious quest to force the Social Democrats to cut social spending and the welfare state," Mr. Holm said.

Economists say the budget's contents could encourage rating agency Stan-dard Poor's (S.P.'s) to follow the example of Moody's and downgrade Sweden. Moody's downgraded Sweden's sovereign debt last week and S.P's is reviewing Sweden at the moment

Markets will watch to see whether the minority government is able to get its savings package through parliament.

HOW DO YOU GET THE

BREAD IN THE TOASTER?

UAE to base '95 budget on current oil prices

ABU DHABI (R) — The United Arab Emirates (UAE) is basing its 1995 budget on current oil prices, minister of state for finance and industry Ahmad Bin Humaid Al Tayer said Mon-

Asked by reporters what oil price the Arab Gulf state's budget would be based on, Mr. Tayer said: "Current prices.

"If there's any improvement (in oil prices) it will help, but we can't base a budget on that," he added, speaking after a weekly meet-Abu Dhabi.

February futures for the

world benchmark Brent Crude oil closed at around \$16.80 in London Friday. UAE President Zaid Bin Sultan Al Nahayan Monday issued a decree authorising monthly allocations equiva-lent to one-twelvth of the

1994 budget. The Emirates News Agency which reported the decree said the allocations were intended to pay mostly for salaries and social program-mes until the new budget was

Last year the cabinet approved the budget in February and Sheikh Zaid

signed it into law in May. It has yet to approve the 1995 budget and Mr. Tayer declined to say how it might differ from last year's, which set revenues at 16.2 billion dirhams (\$4.4 billion) and spending at 17.61 billion (\$4.79 billion).

The UAE's 1994 budget about one per cent from the previous year's levels.

"Last year's (economic) performance was good but .. the price and our (OPEC) quota ... will affect expenditure at the federal and local level in 1995," Mr. Tayer

But he said any cuts in spending on public projects would come in the form of trimming costs rather than cancellations.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 11, 1995 By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: One of the best days this month to seek out those interest that appeal to you, and decide if you want to make them part of your life. Study your practical relationship with others and try to improve them.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Be enthused about whatever your activities are and get anuch completed beautifully, even if delays occur. Take it easy tonight with your loved ones.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Plan early to get into new outlets which can lift you out of the doldrums and make your life happier and more profitable for the future. GRMINI: (May 21 to June 21) There may be a myriad of small tasks to be handled at home, so see to it that they are done. Invite close

friends in for the evening. MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) First handle desk assignments wisely, then have important talks with fellow associates. Tonight is best for being with a companion.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Be more practical and handle your correctly. Be romantic in the evening with mate.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Get yourself into the position which is most to your liking. Feel happier. You are a discriminating person and get fine results.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Early get business affairs attended to wirely, later, handle personal affairs quietly. Enjoy some romantic interlude in your own way.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Being with the most precise friends you know and getting their views for your personal advancement is wise now. Take it easy tonight. SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) This is a good day

for handling any credit and career matters which are important. Gain backing from a powerful individual.

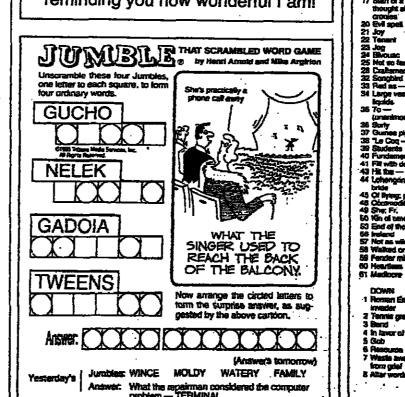
CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Plan how to get out of that rut you are in. Cultivate a new acquaintance, and turn this person into a good friend who trust. AQUARRUS: (January 21 to February 19) Get busy at business affairs which can give you a greater abundance and make property more valuable. Be happy with your mate.

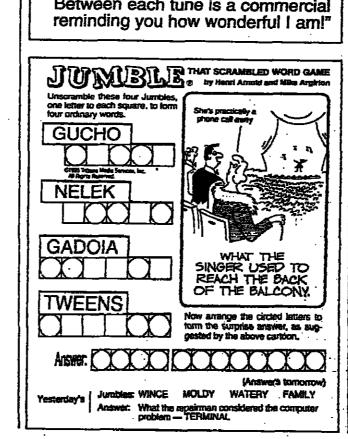
PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Discussions with your partners can lead to something very worthwhile, so get in touch with them early. Be with a charming person.

Birthstone of January: Garnet - Rose Quartz



"I made a tape of your favorite songs. Between each tune is a commercial

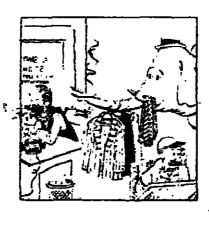






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Hubble spots

collision between

2 galaxies

BALTIMORE, Many telescope has photopy rare and spectacularly collision between the test that offers new horse the birth of star see with a Hubble come opportunity to study and proportion of the provider opportunity to study and the terms of massive star of the birth of star see with a Hubble come opportunity to study and the terms of massive star opportunity to study and the massive star opportunity to study and the terms of the provider opportunity to study and the terms of the provider opportunity to study and the terms of the provider of the terms of the

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Business & Finance

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A review of economic news from the Arabic press

Tyre prices expected to rise

sears away in the one agon Scalptor. The way agong was caused to ** According to some merchants, prices of tyres will be matter intruder & careen at through (rising by about 10 per cent in the near future. The increase wheel's core, sendings coincides with a government Ci energy into space, pe decision to stop issuing im-The co-mic shockers port permits for used tyres. The merchants complain that pand ng at 320, high customs on tyres, which attometres an hour (h have not been reduced along mitter for Doft.) garefe with other cuts on car spare several billion new sign parts, have kept the tyre market in a recession but they ting that it so large ther expect a gradual recovery with the depletion of used tyre stocks. The reaction to-Kaunda told ng wards using new Jordanianmade tyres was mixed. Some to gripe about traders said they were competitive with foreign-made tyres and were carrying a six-month or 40,000- $LUSAKA_{L}(R) \sim f_{F}$ Zammian President (kilometre guarantee. Others Kaunda says his gover were more specific, saying that although the Jordanian car is a wreck but people served under him & tyres were cheaper, they are only retreaded tyres that could only compete with the said Tuesday. There used foreign-made tyres. will give Naunda a nery "They cannot endure high Lie when a new fleeting speed or temperatures and ordered for leaden | cannot withstand rough road then, the former page condition," a trader noted (Al Aswaq). should make do with

have been given & Works and Supply to the minister of agricul-Section Kunyanda gale ture strongly rejected the Mr. Kaunda comples. Idea to stop produce exports and the state of his log during the holy month of the weekend Their Ramadan in order to boost Said the care week. local supply and force prices from Mr. Kaendake down. He explained that such National Independent a measure would negatively affect farmers and threaten our presence on the overseas markets. The minister, Mansour Ben Tarif, said the people should learn to turn to alternatives if prices of certain products rise. He hoped "" that a direct relationship of: would develop between producers and consumers where $g(\chi \times \mathcal{G}(R))(g_{-1}R) = g_{-1}$ by farmers can sell directly to man numer no so people in public markets on specific days (Al Aswaq).

Emmit spiride if her AA comprehensive study has reportedly been done by the government to lift the Sie wei vieber anne subsidy on bread. Such a move will bring the cost of a kilogramme of bread to 150 That fils but, according to know-A2.77272 A and Ag ledgeable sources, people Knehubai, in in the who earn less than JD 200 a month will be protected from the price rise by being eligible tunn had planned we for special coupons (Al Aswaq).

marm Aufatha & mater she fell in love me **☆☆** Rice and milk coupons are reportedly being sold on were researched the F Said Bigury is they coupon at 50 fils and the milk That and tur the reput coupon at 200 fils. Furth-The Property ermore, some merchants are attotta: egistet (ffic obtaining subsidised Chinese rice at 150 fils a kilogramme from the Ministry of Supply S. Korean Red and selling it for 380 fils a kilogramme despite the fixing Cross president of the "free" price at 320 fils and the subsidised price at SECUL AFP - Soul 170 fils (Al Aswaq).

Acres Cross Production of the Jordan Trade Association is organising an exhibition, to be held in the Sudanese capital, in early March to South Kora early March to display pro-Section South Ambas ducts of Jordanian industries (Al Ra'i).

announced here Monday Announced nere and home was The Chamber of Comthe invariant role that it is in Singapore to facilitate the entry of Karean charmanship of Jordanian businessmen to Singapore by several to Normal School The pres an entry visa at the airport.
The pres an entry visa at the airport.
The chamber said that to the street South have Jordaniane chamber. tion of the award we have Jordanians obtain an Sana amazesador to the from Cairo was a sana amazesador to the sana amazes and he held some ment to free passess impediment to free passess. potential growth of trade between the two countries

Mother kills drug-addict son SIARSEILLE Plant A Workers at the Jordan Phosphate Mines Com-pany are demanding a JD her drug-addit, pany are demanding a JD her drug-addit wance for performing to find wance for performing Monday after he three 20 monthly raise, an allowanday after he to find wance for performing risky work at production sites, a notice said. Work at production sites, a notice said work at production sites, a notice said allowance for "field work" allowance for "field work" and the payment of production bonus to all work-res. The provident fund of the company's workers has a polygon in their field the company's workers has a production around JD 10 the company's workers has grown to around JD 10 aubagne. A spokend familion and productive producti

S. Korea announced 'real name' measures to curb speculation

SEOUL (AFP) — South Korean President Kim Young- Eugene Yun, an economist with J. Henry Schroder Wagg Sam Monday moved to nip an incipient land-price boom in the bud and bring transparency into a grey area of the economy by banning use of false or borrowed names in real estate transactions from July 1.

Buyers will face jail sentences of up to five years and fines equivalent to one third of land prices for using false or borrowed names. Property owners will have

to register under their own names by June 30. The enactment and revision of the relative laws for

implementing the system would be completed by April, Finance and Economy Minister Hong Jae-Hyong told a news conference here. "The property real-name system, designed to standar-

dize property transactions and stabilise prices, will lay solid foundation in pursuing overall price stability," Mr. Hong said. The construction and transportation ministry will launch a nationwide com-

puterised system from Jan. 25 to trace all property transaction records, a ministry offi-The stock market here reacted favourably to the

announcement, rising 9.52 points after a lacklustre

"For the stock market it is very good news," said

and Co. Ltd, adding: "There had been a three

year calm in real estate prices, and investors were moving their money in anticipation of boom taking off in the fourth year." But some analysts voiced concerns about negative

effects on the construction

market, which accounts for

25 per cent of the nation's gross domestic product. "If the government regulation is too tight, it would freeze the construction market," said Paik Kyung-Hwa, an analyst with Dongbank

Peregrine Securities Co. The step followed a New Year address last week by President Kim Young-Sam, in which he warned the measure would be brought into effect in this year.

"The property real-name system is in line with the real-name system on all financial transactions launched last year and is also a remarkable measure to achieve 'economic justice'." the president told a meeting of economy-related minis-

The financial transaction real name system, introduced without warning on Aug. 12, 1993, forced major assets disclosures by ranking officials in the administration, legislature and judiciary and resulted in purge of officials.

Jordan Times Financial in co-operation with Cairo Amman Bank



Currency	New York	I obyo Close
	Dakg/1/95	last 10/1/95
Sterling Pound*	1.5635	1.5620**
Deutsche Merk	1,5370	1.5582
Swiss Franc	1.2875	1.2873**
French Franc .	5.3145	5.3095**
Јарапезе Уса	- 49.90	100.13
European Curreny Unit	V.2368	1,2345**
IND Per SIN	2. JA	garantian

1 MTE	3 MTUS	6 MTHS	12 MTHS
5.56	6.12	6.62	7.18
5.81	6.25	6.75	7.37
4.75	4.87	5.18	5.62
3,56	3.87	4.12	4.43
5.43	5.61	6.31	6.81
2.12	2.25	2.31	2.50
5.68	6.93	6.40	6.87
	5.56 5.81 4.75 3.56 5.43 2.12 5.68	5.56 6.12 5.81 6.25 4.75 4.87 3.56 3.87 5.43 5.81 2.12 2.25 5.68 6.43	5.56 6.12 6.62 5.21 6.25 6.75 4.75 4.27 5.12 3.56 3.27 4.12 5.43 5.61 6.31 2.12 2.25 2.31

Pracious Motals				Date: 16	////1995
Metal	USD/Oz	JD/Gm ^a	Metal	USD/Oz	JD/Gm
Guid	373.95	7.50	\$2 ver	4.69	0.110

	. Date: 10/1/1995		
Currency	Bid	Offer	
U.S. Dollar	0.7000	0.7020	
Sterling Pound	1.0937	1.0992	
Deutsche Mark	0.4546	0.4569	
Swiss Franc	0.5428	0.5455	
French Franc	0.1315	0.1322	
Japanese Yea ⁶	0.6978	0.7613	
Dutch Guilder	0.4056	0.4076	
Swedish Krone	**1411	*****	
Italian Lira*	0.0457	0.0433	
Belgian Franc	*****	*****	

Other Currencies	Dete	Date: 0/1/1995		
Carrency	Bfd	Office		
Behraini Dinar	1.5410	1.8530		
Lebensse Lira*	0.041735	0.042838		
Saudi Kiyai	9.1860	0.1872		
Kuwsiti Digar .	2,3000	2.3500		
Qatari Riyai .	0.1910	0.1923		
Egyptian Pound	0.2000	0.2150		
Omani Riyal	1.2060	1.8180		
UAE Dirloam	0.1900	0.1909		
Greek Drachme*	0.2775	0.3175		
Cyprict Found	1,4070	1:5025		

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

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tes for leading	world currencies n on the London	the buying and selling and gold against the Foreign Exchange and	Clarks
.S. \$1.00 costs ne sterling ne ounce of gold	1.4082/92 1.5364/74 1.7228/38 1.2870/80 31.66/70 5.3130/80 1623.8/4.8 100.33/43 7.4925/25 6.7310/60 6.0575/25 \$1.5604/14 \$373.85/374.25	Canadian dollar Deutschemarks Dutch guilders Swiss francs Belgian francs French francs Italian lire Japanese yen Swedish crowns Norwegian crowns Danish crowns	KURDI STORES Suwaifiah Tel. 827105

Pakistan smuggling booms despite tariff cuts

ISLAMABAD (R) — Smug-gling into Pakistan, thinly disguised as transit trade to Afghanistan, has more than doubled in the past six months, despite government attempts to curb it by reducing tariffs on legal imports, officials say.

The smugglers typically bring in consumer goods such as refrigerators, television sets and air-conditioners, saying they are destined for war-ravaged Afghanistan, few of whose people have money to buy appliances or electricity to run them.

Officials say the goods, imported under a long-standing transit agreement with landlocked Afghanistan, seldom reach the Afghan border or if they do cross it, swiftly re-

COMPANY'S KAME

ARAB BANK
JORDAN NATIONAL BANK / NEW
JORDAN NATIONAL BANK / NEW
BANK OF JORDAN
THE HOUSING BANK

AMMAN BANK FOR INVESTMENT

ARAB BANKING CORPORATION/JORDAN PHILADELPHIA INVESTMENT BANK.

JORDAN FRENCH INSURANCE YARMOUK INSURANCE E REINSURANCE

SERVICES SECTOR

THE JORDAN CEMENT FACTORIES
THE ARAB POTASH/NEW
ARAB PHARMACEUTICAL MANUFACTURING

AMAB PAPER CONVERTING & TRADING NATIONAL STEEL INDUSTRY UNIVERSAL CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES

KAWTHER INVESTMENT UNIVERSAL MODERN INDUSTRIES JORDAN INDUSTRIAL RESOURCES CO.

JORDAN INDUSTRIES & MATCH/JIMCO NATIONAL CABLE & WIRE MANUFACTURING JORDAN SULPHO-CHEMICALS

NO. OF TRADED SHARES IN PARALLEL MARKET VALUE TRADED IN PARALLEL MARKET

RAFIA INDUSTRIES
ARAB INVESTMENT & INFRNATIONAL TRADE
ARAB ALUMINIUM INDUSTRY

SPINNING & WEAVING

LIVESTOCK & POULTRY

GRAND TOTAL

INSURANCE SECTOR

JORDANIAN ELECTRIC POWER

JORDANIAN ELECTRIC POWER /NEW

JORDAN HIMEH MINERAL

ARAB INTERNATIONAL HOTELS

JORDAN MATIONAL SHIPPING LINES

JORDAN GULF REAL ESTATE INVESTMENT

UNITED HIDDLE EAST & COMMODORE HOTELS

ARAB INTER. FOR INVESTMENT & EDUCATION

SECTOR

JORDAN KUWAIT BANK JORDAN GULF BANK JORDAN ISLAMIC BANK

BUSINESS BANK

BANKS

"All indications are that smuggling has increased despite efforts to bring it down," said a senior customs official, who asked not to be

He said that imports under the Afghan transit trade shot up to 11 billion rupees (\$359) million) from July to December, the first six months of the 1994/95 fiscal year, compared to 5.3 billion rupees

Economists estimate the transit trade accounts for 50 to 60 per cent of all smuggling into Pakistan.

period the previous year.

(\$173.2 million) in the same

Pakistan's legal imports edged up to \$3.603 billion from July to November from \$3.520 billion in the same vear-ago period, according to

AMMAN FINANCIAL MARKET
HOUSING BANE CENTER AMMAE - SEMBISANI
TELEPHONE: 660170 / 663170
ORGANIZED MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR TUSEDAY 10/

the Federal Bureau of Statis-

It its June budget, the government slashed maximum import tariffs to an average of 70 per cent from 92 per cent and raised excise duties on consumer goods regarded as popular contraband items to narrow the price gap between

smuggled and legal goods. This, it argued, would cut smugglers' profits and the volume of the illicit trade by half.

Government officials are now wondering why their strategy has apparently back-

Traders imported 38,000 refrigerators, ostensibly for Afghanistan, in the last six months of 1994, compared to 5.000 in the same 1993

CLOSING PRICE

4.310 4.230

1.640 3.750 2.630

1.500 4.050 1.690

1.550 1.500 2.900 5.100

3.250

2.950 5.500 5.540 2.730 2.770 1.060 7.450 .950

5.320 1.950

1.800 4.200 2.150

CHAKGE

INDEX NUMBER: 129.71

INDEX NUMBER: 145.16 CHANGE : -0.152

4.320 4.250 3.750 5.810 3.040 1.610 3.700 3.600

1.500 4.100 1.680

INDEX NUMBER: 159.21 CHANGE : 0.007

2.460 2.460 3.050 3.000

INDEX NUMBER: 137.27

1.270 1.300 2.470 2.480 3.450 3.450

INDEX NUMBER: 134.51 CHANGE : -0.522

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period. The figure for airconditioners jumped to 98,000 from 4,000 and television sets to 295,000 from 38,000.

"These figures beat me," the customs official said. "We expected a decrease after removing the incentive for smuggling, but that has not happened so far."

A.R. Kemal, director of the Pakistani Institute of Development Economics, estimates smuggled goods were worth \$4 billion in fiscal 1993/ 94, or 30 per cent of total imports.

He said tariff cuts were too small to wreck the profits of smugglers and increased vigi- local industry or not.

lance at airport customs posts may have forced them to rely more on the Afghan transit trade.

Large-scale smuggling deprives Pakistan of badly needed revenue and hits local industry producing similar goods.

Nasim Ahmad, marketing director of Phillips Electrical Industries, said smuggling of television sets was cutting into the company's sales and profit margins.

"The industry is burting in terms of production and profit," he said. "The government has to make up its mind whether it wants to protect

Saatchi shaken by defection of executives

LONDON (R) - Saatchi and Saatchi, the world's second-largest advertising agency, has been shaken by a new turn in its grim boardroom battle — the resigna-tions of three top executives in support of deposed chairman Maurice Saatchi.

The advertising giant suf-feted the further blow Monday as the three quit only a week after cofounder Maurice Saatchi was forced out by a key U.S. investor. British newspapers said Tuesday the agency faced a threat of defection by several leading clients.

The Financial Times said Charles and Maurice Saatchi, the brothers who founded the firm in the 1970s, had disposed of their remaining stake in the firm, selling their 1.8 million shares at the beginning of last week.

The resignations of acting chairman Jeremy Sinclair and U.S. and U.K. managers Bill Muirhead and David Kershaw came a week after Maurice was ousted by a group of U.S. investors led by David Herro of Chicagobased fund manager Harris Associates. "Industry insiders were

speculating further big names might soon join the dissidents and that important accounts could be lost as clients express their disapproval," the Times said. "Mars, the American confectioner, and British Air-

ways have both indicated formally that their accounts are er added. None of Saatchi's big clients have yet announced any rupture with the group although Mars said in De-

huge worldwide advertising Saatchi and Saatchi said

cember it was reviewing its

the departure of the three was not the end of the world. It appointed chief executive Charlie Scott as acting chairman and naming Michael Bungey and Ed Wax as the new board members.

But the departures sent a shock wave through the industry.

A week ago the stock traded between 138 pence and 146 pence. On Monday it lost 16 pence to close at 124, The three attacked the influence of Mr. Herro.

"I no longer feel that the people who control our company understand what we really do," Mr. Muirhead said in his resignation letter, printed in the London newspaper The Evening Standard along with those of Mr. Kershaw and Mr. Sinclair.

"I now feel totally compromised by Mr. Herro and the board's decision (to oust Maurice Saatchi), particularly as it was against the express wishes of several of our clients, including a number I am personally close to." he edded. Mr. Scott told the Finan-

cial Times that the resignations were a "cynical campaign to destabilise the group" and said it would hold the three to the notice period of their contracts, which would keep the three at the group for at least 12 months. "It is a shame that good people had to leave." said Mr. Herro.

But he denied claims of excessive meddling in the management of the agency. "My only interest is that the group's directors represent shareholders' interests," he told the newspaper.

Analysts said there must now be speculation that the three will set up a new agency with Mr. Maurice and maybe attract some clients from the Saatchi Group.

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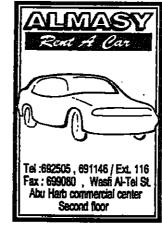
Once Tasted Always Loved

& Fun













12 noon - 3:30 p.m.

6:30 - 11:30 p.m.

Tel.: 861838







Paris-Dakar Rally

Vatanen breakdown puts him out of contention

CHINGUETTI, Mauritania (R) — A broken radiator cost Ari Vatanen all chance of a fifth title in the Dakar Rally. He ended up stranded in the desert on Monday and unable to defend the lead he has held for the best part of a week. Vatanen's Citroen broke

down after 467 kms of the 504-km eighth leg from Zourerat across the Mauritanian sands.

He managed to buy water from local nomads and got his car going. But he broke

His Citroen teammate, Pierre Lartigue, last year's rally winner, gained the overail lead after a tough day's driving during which winds whipped up a sandstorm.

Lartigue leads by just over 20 minutes from 1993 winner Bruno Saby, driving a Mitsu-

Barring a double mishap, the two Frenchman are the only ones with a realistic chance of winning the race which finishes in Dakar Sunday. Third-placed Kenjiro Shinozuka of Japan is more than two-and-a-half hours behind in his Mitsubishi.

Spain's Jordi Afcarons remotorcycle section on his Cagiva but a thrilling finish can be expected with threetimes winner Stephane Peterhansel of France only

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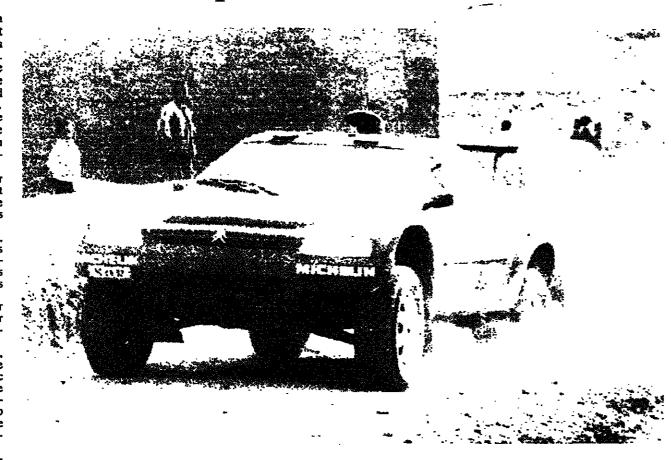
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Finnish driver Ari Vatanen speeds through a village in Morocco during the third stage of the Paris-Dakar Rally (AFP photo)

naldi is well in contention on out of sight.

seven minutes behind on a his Yamaha and last year's winner, Cagiva rider Edi Frenchman Thierry Mag- Orioli of Italy, is not entirely

Supermarket

jor problems for most of the riders. Former race leader time after getting bogged Heinz Kinigadner of Austria

Thrill sport costs lives for death-wish kids

snowboarding has been given a new and dangerous twist on the ski slopes of Europe.

The sport which took off in the United States has gathered a cult following among

kids seeking thrills at all costs. For them that means dicing with death by avalanche surfing — using the base of their board to kick-start snow slips then riding their

crest for kicks. The spate of deaths on the European ski slopes in the last month — six in one weekend alone — was blamed by resort officials mostly on the irresponsibility of people who wandered off piste and were swallowed in avalan-

ches on dangerous tracts of snow. The new breed of winter sports fan scorns the crowd and heads for the virgin snow, high

on the cols were the real thrills, and dangers, are to be found. "My wardens spend their days being in-sulted when they advise these kids not to go

off piste," said Jean Neel, head official at the Val d'Isere ski resort in the French Alps. "Then they spend their evenings being insulted again when the kids come back and say 'hey, we're still here."

"The worse thing is the flouting of regulations," said Jean-Loup Costerg, an official at Val d'Isere who is in overall charge of piste maintenance and security for all French ski

"People go anywhere anytime, after heavy snow falls or high wind. There are specialist magazines that tell them to do just that to get

At Val D'Isere, a group of young Swedish snowboarders recently went in search of thrills away from the regulations ski runs and found tragedy instead. Richard Olof Holger, 24, died in an avalanche and one of his friends

"In that accident with the Swedes at Val D'Isere they were having fun setting off their own avalanches. The third one got them," said Costerg

Snowboarding was brought to Europe from

the United States in the late 1980s and has limited when Eric since won thousands of fans all over the limited in superb

The sport has developed into a multi-million-dollar industry with its own World when the cup series, and with the backing of Internation of the minutes when tional Olympic Committee president Juan gelve minutes when Antonio Samaranch, the sport is hoping to the French make its Olympic debut at the Nagano Games, ske on the French in Japan in 1998.

But on the ski slopes of Europe snowboar, is health in the hunt, ders are the outlaws, flouting the rules and is least of his feat flirting with danger.

The director of one Alpine resort said: miths ago, Weish recently that security in ski resorts in the light sank Sheffield United States was far tighter than in Europe. The minute header. "On the slopes over there, rule-breakers then rubbed salt in are banned," he said. "They just get told to reside a wounds with go home. Here they do what they want, shed goal to ensure Nobody lays down the law."

This season has brought more snowboar. Against Wreyham, ders than ever before to the Alpine ski against were set up by stations and most obey the same rules. stations and most obey the same rules as the spak were set up by more traditional winter sports fans. But many the dat has cluded him don't and a few pay a heavy price.

German teenager Christophe

German teenager Christophe just wanted of the season And at extra thrill in I a Planne in the wanted the Ferguson prethat extra thrill in La Plagne in the French of the season pre-that extra thrill in La Plagne in the French of Alex Ferguson pre-alps. The 19-year-old ducked under a safety! in Premiership show-cordon with two friends and ignored at least on Newcastles and one danger sign.

He never came back, carried off in and by successful comavalance and a resort warden told later hows in Peter Schmeiche! he pleaded with the three teenagers to stay on & Sharpe

Seven people were killed on the slopes in itsien Sheffield Un-Austria within two days last week, most of skil way to their 1000 them on virgin snow off the normal ski russ, u.f.A. Cup wins At least one was a snowboarder, a 25-year-old stam on the path to

Australian who started his own avalanche and [40] European Cup whose body was recovered a day later along tup tnumph. with three Germans who were also swept to its win was every bit their deaths. With fresh avalanche warning posted this Lane, where the

week in the Alps and the Pyrenees, the spate from last Janudanger for the death-wish kids is greater that an Hughes was sent



Picture taken 20 August 1972 in Copenhagen showing Argentine Carlos Monzon (left) during his fight against Tom Bogs of Denmark.

all-time was killed in a car accident of

Boxing great Monzon dies on way to prison

Carlos, Monzon, one of the great boxers of all-time, was killed in a car accident on Sunday as he was driving back to prison.

The former world middleweight champion, sentenced to 11 years in 1988 for the murder of his wife, had

been on parole for good be-

haviour. He was returned to

prison from his home in San-

Monzon knocked out the legendary Italian Nino Benvenutti in the 12th round in November, 1970, in Rome and defended his title 14 times up to 1977.

He retired after his second 15-rounder with Colombia's Rodrigo Valdez at Monte Carlo in July, 1977. "He was one of the greatest." said Benvenutti,

field, supported by the relevant

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the 1960 Olympic well weight champion who wi knocked out in three rous in their re-match in 1971 Monte Carlo. "He has to be remembered for his sporting he got into afterwards.'

Eleven of Monzon's world title fights were Europe and one of the best was a pulsating 15-rounded against Frenchman Jean Jaude Bouttier in Paris 1973 when he became friend of actor Alain Delor The movie world became

his second career although will not be remembered in his string of bit parts spaghetti-style films. He was convicted a

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and coming to TOSSIC 25 2 Warmthe German activeek s Australian We're my to been fine-tuning better, make

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of clubs first W through, in trucks monds could be said After cashing the spades, declarer = 1 trump to the queen the third diamend were will the acc and

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down to law.

luck of Sheffield United's brave Irish goalkeeper Alan sates in the late 1980s a coursends of tans all on ... Kelly finally ran out late in the second-half in Monday night's entertaining F.A. Cup clash against holders Manhas developed into a co nd with the backing only of Cantona fired in superb chester United when first nd with the backing of his goals. ne Committee president the sport is by now deput at the Nagant of

Reduced to ten men after just twelve minutes when okt dopes of Europe and coulons flouting the me Charlie Hartfield was sent off for a tackle on the French striker, Kelly produced a series of breathtaking saves to keep his team in the hunt. But in a repeat of his feat twelve months ago, Welsh striker Highes sank Sheffield with a 79th minute header.

Cantona then rubbed salt in the home side's wounds with a clever lobbed goal to ensure United a fourth-round clash at home against Wrexham.
Both of the Manchester United goals were set up by Ryan Giggs, at last showing the class that has eluded him Committe binding in the bar manager Alex Ferguson pretwo inend, and ignored; paring for Premiership showdarme back carned of. downs with Newcastles and Blackburn, was further a cose warden told be boosted by successful comebacks by Peter Schmeichel

And they will feet turky, having beaten Sheffield Unterly with normal tited on their way to their 1990 and 1994 F.A. Cup wins— ' and Lee Sharpe and 1994 F.A. Cup wins and Wrexham on the path to ALLE MELE STOR OF CLA

Winners' Cup triumph. But this win was every bit as hard as they feared at A.P. and the Pyrese Bramall Lane, where the legacy of spite from last January, when Hughes was sent off after scoring, soured the game when Arsenal reject Hartfield was sent off for cuffing Cantona.

Sheffield's anger had been and Butt fired wide. Kelly fuelled when Darlington referee Robbie Hart denied them a clear penalty as Steve Bruce scythed down Nathan Blake in a desperate scram-

ble from Paul Rogers' cross. Rogers was no incensed he was booked for dissent and then lunged through young Nicky Butt, sparking the melee in which 23-year-old Hartfield, dismissed in the Anglo-Italian Cup this season, lost his cool as the

Frechman kicked out at him. But the Premiership giants, forced to accelerate Schmeichel's comeback when Gary Walsh succumbed to the Old Trafford 'flu epidemic, struggled to make the extra man count.

They were already indebted to their Danish goalkeeper in the gale-force wind and rain, when he scooped out Blake's sixth minute close range shot and then saved again when 20-year-old John O'Kane's clearance came

back off Glyn Hodges.
Bassett's Australian find Carl Veart tormented them, Dennis Irwin deflecting his falling volley behind and then booked for a foul on the man from Adelaide; Bruce was shown his sixth yellow card of the season for a two-footed foul on Blake which earns him a two-game ban. It look Ferguson's cham-

pions 28 minutes to create their first chance — Hughes' header from Giggs being well held by the diving kelly. The goalkeeper was beaten by Hughes' stooping header three minutes later but the

bal crashed back off his right hand post. Manchester's running game began to stretch the home side, and with the wind

at their backs, both Keane

Sheffield's 'Irish' luck runs out | Tomba bombs out tipped over a Butt header as his side were pegged back. rivais But in the 63rd minute the

underdogs countered — Ro-PARIS (AFP) — Alberto gers setting up Kevin Gage for a swerving left foot shot Tomba loves his playboy reputation - but he loves from the corner of the penalskiing even more. ty area which Schmeichel just

The city boy from Bologna who took the ski world by touched round the far post. Sharpe, who has missed 15 storm in 1988 by winning two games with an ankle injury, gold medals at the Calgary Olympics can still summon replaced O'Kane in the 65th minute and almost imup the adrenalin racers need mediately conspired with Canto win what are essentially tona to give Butt another chance. Though he beat Keltime-trials. The 28-year-old Italian has ly to the delightful chip, the wonderful balance and

ball cannoned wide from tremendous strength but that eight yards. is only half the battle in a sport which pits each indi-Again Scheffield replied vidual against the clock. positively, Hodges flashing a Tomba loves the exciteshot just a splinterwide, but ment and, better still, loves Kelly had to save them again in the 71st minute, Keane's the adulation that comes from winning. run and Butt's cross-shot pre-

firt choice brilliantly blocked point-blank range. He was on the ball again to hold Bruce's lunged shot when Gary Pallister flicked on Giggs' corner.

senting Cantona with a great

chance until Jack Charlton's

But he had no chance when the young Welsh international set up his senior partner with a great cross from the left, planted firmly inside the near post by Hughes for his seventh goal of the season.

As Sheffield heads drooped, Giggs again pulled them to pieces with a dash down the left and switched the ball across to the unmarked Cantona, 20 yards out who arrogantly chipped the ball over the stranded Kelly and under the bar.

The home side's misery was completed when Dane Whitehouse was stretchered off after a late collision with

Becker, triple Wimbledon

and U.S. and Australian

Open champion, had a resur-

gent 1994, climbing to world

number three after drifting to

ber 11 after the hirth

He hit back last year with

title wins in Milan, Los Angeles, New Haven and

Stockholm and said tennis

was now high again on his

"I changed many things in

1993... manager and coach,

then in the beginning of '94

with the baby being born and

healthy, I could concentrate

again on tennis. Therefore I

played much better and had a

The 1991 Australian Open champion said this year's event was wide open with a

number of players in good form and world number one

Pete Sampras' grip at the top

"It's the first tournament

for everyone," Becker said.

'Apart from one or two play-

ers in the top 10, nobody has

olayed a tournament, so I

think you have many people

here who have a good

loosening marginally.

successful year.

good."

his son in 1993.

priority list.

event since finishing third at Kitzbuhel, in Austria. on Jan. 16, 1994. He needs two more slalom wins to equal the all-time record of seven set by Sweden's Ingemar Stenmerk in 1976-77 and matched by

"But don't let his show-

manship fool you," said Swiss

great Primin Zurbriggen whose record of 40 World

Cup wins Tomba equalled on

"He obviously works hard

at his sport and putting on a

show. And you have to ack-

nowledge he is simply one of

the best slalom racers ever."

beaten run in World Cup

races to seven on Sunday

when he won a slalom at

Garmisch-Partenkirchen in

Germany for the third year

running. Alongside his five

slalom wins, he has also won

two of the four giant slaloms

raced this season. He was

fourth in the first and pulled

out with cracked ribs in the

Tomba, who also won the

last two slaloms last season,

has not been beaten in this

Tomba stretched his un-

Sunday.

second.

Marc Girardelli in 1984-85. Only Girardelli, with 43, and Stenmark, with an un-reachable 86, have won more World Cup races. He has two chances to do

so in Kitzbuhel and Wengen, Switzerland, this weekend before the World Chamgeneral approach to the game. At 27 year old I can hardly change any more strokes." pionships in Sierra Nevada. Spain, at the end of the month interrupt the World

Cup.
Tomba has never won the World Cup and never been higher than third in a World Championship race.

"My number one priority is the World Championships, he said. "I know I have little real hope of winning the World Cup."

He chose to prolong his career because of the championships and because he knows an overall triumph is beyond him because he does not race the speed events. Tomba believes he will be

too old by the time the next championships come around His three gold and two silver medals at the Olympics

have surpassed his mentor "But I'm surprised when people say I had a bad year in '93. I finished the year num-ber 11" or so which is quite Gustavo Thoni, who won two slalom silver and a giant slalom gold in 1972 and 1976.

But Thoni won another six medals at the World Championships. Tomba won a giant slalom bronze medal at the 1987 Championships but has generally run into bad luck at this event. He was sick for most of the 1993 Championships in Japan where Norway's Kjetil-Andre Aamodt who won both slaiom and giant slaiom.

Aamodt's best result this season was second in a giant slalom at Val d'Isere in France in December when Tomba pulled out.

Romario quits Barcelona

BARCELONA (AFP) - Brazilian striker Romario has quit Barcelona and joined Flamengo, the Rio de Janeiro club's president Kleber Leite said here Monday.

Following negotiations with Barcelona vice president Joan Gaspart. Leite said a "verbal accord" had been struck between the two clubs and the financial package would be worked out over the next 48

Flamengo have agreed to sign Romario on a two-year contract for seven million dollars. according to club sources, one million more than they originally offered. The Brazilian World Cup star is on contract with the Spanish champions until

But Gaspart said their would be no confirmation from Barcelona until the money was on the table.

The Barcelona board were examining the offer and the vice president said: "Until I receive assurance that the money is in the bank I won't be making any official statement.

Leite said he hoped to have Romario on the plane for Rio "either Tuesday or Wednesday," adding: "The deal will be sealed in 48 hours when we have the financial guarantees.

After bringing the World Cup back to Brazil from the United States last summer, Romario has been unsettled at the Spanish champions, complaining of stress and scoring only four league goals this

hind in Rio and has been linked with his old club Romario, 29, born in Vasco da Gama, where Rio, made an immediate he made his professional impact after joining Bardebut in 1985, and celona last season from Flamengo, after repe-

Brazil's Romario

championships.

fined him heavily.

He left his family be-

PSV Eindhoven, whom

he helped to three Dutch

atedly saying he wanted to return to Brazil. Leite said Romario's

problem was of a man

He was top scorer in who wants to return Spain with 30 goals in his after eight years away first year but arrived from home. back from Brazil a His decline in form month late at the start of has apparently perthis season, angering suaded Cruyff he can do coach Johan Cruyff who without the explosive ta-

lents of the Brazilian striker. The weekend's 5-0 defeat at Real Madrid was the last straw for the Dutchman, who left Romario out of the start-

ing line-up and brought

him on halfway through the game.

But the player who last year scored 10 goals in 10 games for Brazil, was largely ineffectual. Cruyff said after the

game: "I want the best from my players. If Romario is not happy here and want to go home, he no longer interests me."

Under the new accord, Romario is contracted to play Flamingo until June 1996, date of the expiry of his Barcelona contract.

Wihdat, Kufrsoum score vital wins

AMMAN (J.T.) — Al Wihdat Tuesday scored a vital 1-0 victory over Al Hussein to keep the lead in the first division soccer

In another match, Kufrsoum defeated Al Arabi 1-0 while Al Faișali crushed

Shabab Al Hussein 3-0, (See details and overall standings in Thursday's round-

Back to boom boom for Becker

MELBOURNE (AFP) -Boris Becker has reverted to basics in an effort to recapture the fearsome form which netted him five grand slam titles between 1985 and 1991.

Becker, here to play in the Kooyong Classic as a warmup for next week's Australian Open, has been fine-tuning his attacking "Of course I have a few

areas in my game which are not as strong as others so we and coming to the net often." the German said Tuesday.

"It has a lot to do with your

are working on that, but mainly I'm going back to my kind of tennis which is power tennis - taking the ball early "We're trying to make that better, make it more effec-

WITH OMAR SHARII & TANNAH HIRSCH

Both vulnerable. South deals A 75
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The bidding:
South West North East

1 Pass 2 Pass

2 Pass 4 Pass

Pass Pass

Opening lead: King of
Be prepared, the Scouts' motto,
also could serve as the rallying cry of
the bridge experts. Murphy's Law
(If something can go wrong, it will)
is another sobering influence at the
bridge table.

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is another sopering inherece at the bridge table. South had almost enough to bid game, once hearts had been raised. After a somewhat more cautious tri-al bid in spades, North had the right

GOREN BRIDGE

THE COUNT IS KING

cards to accept the invitation.

When this hand was played in an international pair event, most South players wasted no time in going down. Those declarer ruffed the opening diamond lead in hand and cashed the king and queen of trumps. Once East showed out on the second round, the contract was doomed as long as the defense didn't get careless. Try it for yourselves.

Among the few declarers to land the contract was Taiwan internationalist M.F. Tai. He ruffed the opening lead, but instead of touching trumps, cashed the ace and king of clubs first. When both went through, 10 tricks could almost be guaranteed. There were seven tricks in high cards and two more diamonds could be ruffed in the closed hand.

hand.

After cashing the king and ace of spades, declarer ruffed a diamond. A trump to the queen was the entry for the third diamond ruff and there were still the ace and king of trumps to complete a somewhat unusual partial dummy reversal. The technique delivered the goods, even though a defender held one trump more than the table.

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IAEA has no evidence of nuclear arms in Iran

cy said on Tuesday it had no evidence from its regular inspections of Iran that the country was building nuclear

David Kyd, spokesman of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), said the Vienna-based agency had found nothing to support claims made by U.S. and Israeli leaders on Monday that Iran could build a nuclear bomb within seven to 15

"We inspect Iran on a quarterly basis and we have found nothing indicative of a programme other than for peaceful purposes," Mr. Kyd told Reuters.

"We have found the Iranians in compliance with their obligations to the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT)," he added.

But he said the IAEA "doesn't give Iran a clean bill of health any more than any other country.

U.S. Secretary of Defence William Perry and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin said in occupied Jerusalem on Monday they believed Iran could build a nuclear bomb within seven to 15

IAEA officials have said the agency was aware of various intelligence estimates that Iran could have nuclear weapons within even five years, but said they had no evidence that would support those predictions.

A senior Iranian official meanwhile Tuesday dismis-

atomic potential as evidence of pro-Israeli bias and reiterated that Iran opposed the presence of nuclear weapons in the Gulf.

Iranian First Deputy Fore-ign Minister Mohammad Hashemi said during a visit to Kuwait that if Washington was concerned about dealing fairly with the region it should force its ally Israel to open its arsenal to interna-

tional nuclear inspection. "We have always declared that we are against the pre-sence of a nuclear, biological or chemical weapon or any weapon of mass destruction in the region." he told Reuters when asked about reports that Iran might develop its own nuclear weapons.

"If America had any credibility... it must force or oblige Israel to open its borders for international search by the nuclear energy agency (IAEA)," Mr. Hashemi said.

"The Americans know that these aims and subjects fall under a selective policy... thus, American credibility in this region has fallen, and the people of the world know the Americans' behaviour." he

Mr. Perry said Monday Washington was working with republics of the former Soviet Union to ensure they did not transfer nuclear weapons or technology to the Islamic republic.

Israel is widely believed to have nuclear weapons but has consistently refused to confirm or deny their possession. Egyptian Foreign Minister

endangering Middle East peace by stockpiling nuclear arms and other weapons of

"Peace in the Middle East is under threat because Israel continues to accumulate weapons of total destruction... Israel possesses a nuclear arsenal the extent of which no one knows," Mr. Musa told parliament late on Monday.

The world must be told what is going on in this field so that it realises the extent of the danger threatening the Middle East from weapons of mass destruction," he added.

Egypt, the first Arab country to make peace with Israel, has proposed making the Middle East a region free of all nuclear, biological and

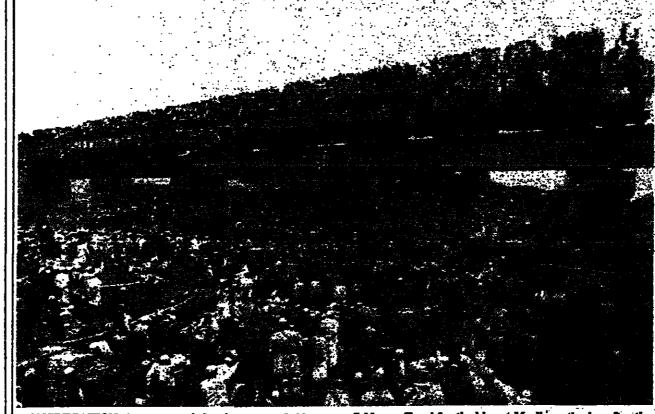
chemical weapons.

But Israel, arguing that some Middle East states are still hostile, has not opened its nuclear programme to international inspection.

The dispute has been gathering momentum as the United States lobbies Middle East states to vote for an extension of the Non-Proliferation Treaty in Geneva in April.

Mr. Perry, on a visit to Cairo last week, said the treaty was of worldwide import-

"I told President (Hosni) Mubarak the U.S. regarded an extension of the treaty as important not just for the region but for the whole world and I will say the same thing to Israel," he told re-



CONGREGATION: An overcrowded train crosses a bridge carrying thousands of Muslim pilgrims to Tougi in Bang-ladesh. At least two million people converged on a muddy

field near Tougi for the biggest Muslim gathering after the annual pligrimage to Mecca (AFP photo)

Israeli jets raid Hizbollah position

TYRE. Lebanon (Agencies) — Israeli warplanes attacked a post of the Hizbollah group in South Lebanon on Tuesday after its guerrillas wounded two Israeli-allied militia-

men, security sources said. They said at least one rocket was fired at a Hizbollah (Party of God) position on Mlita hill in Iqlim Al Toufah. a ridge 40 kilometres south of Beirut used by the group to launch attacks on Israel's occupation zone in the south. There was no immediate word on casualties in the air

strike, the first into Lebanon A Hizbollah spokesman in Beirut confirmed the air raid. Earlier on Tuesday guerrillas attacked a series of posts of Israel's proxy South Lebanon Army (SLA) militia,

wounding two militiamen, SLA sources said. They said guerrillas fired mortar bombs. rocketpropelled grenades and machineguns at eight SLA posts in the Jezzine area in a finger of territory jutting north of Israel's occupation

zone in South Lebanon. Hizbollah said in a statement its fighters at around midnight assaulted 11 Israeli army and SLA positions in the Jezzine area and in the border zone, inflicting several casualties.

In retaliation, Israel and SLA artillerymen fired about 150 shells near Mashghara and 'Ain Al Tineh villages. prompting many villagers to flee to safer areas, the sources added.

One of the SLA militiamen wounded in Tuesday's attack was reported to be in critical

It was the second series of attacks in five days on that area of the zone, which is adjacent to the southern sec-

tor of the Bekaa Valley. A spokesman for Hizbol-lah's armed wing in the town of Mashghara, in the southern sector of the Bekaa Valley, said guerrillas attacked SLA positions and "succeeded in occupying two of them in Kfarhuna and Tumat

Niha. "Our combattants returned safely to their bases after briefly occupying the two positions." the spokes-

The SLA's Voice of the South radio said it pushed back the assault. On Monday Hizbollah guerrillas killed an SLA miliiaman and wounded an Israeli soldier in attacks

which were followed by a

six-hour gunbattle. Lebanese police said meanwhile Israel was adopting guerrilla warfare tactics to fight the anti-Israeli resistance in Lebanon by launching ambushes north of its self-declared "security zone.

"Patrois of 10 to 15 members are infiltrating outside the occupied zone and taking up positions in the adjacent valleys normally used by anti-Israeli fighters." a police spokesman said. They are staying there all

zht. waneume. : the hope of trapping them." The Israeli army had abondoned such methods after an incident in May 1993 when two of its patrols mistook each other for guerrillas and opened fire killing four and wounding three.

U.N. troops evacuate |French Mogadishu compound Muslims and some 350 U.N. civilian

lia ends.

The move to the airport

will be completed by the weekend, officials said, but a

950-strong security battalion of Pakistani troops will re-

main at the 33-hectare com-

pound to deter looters as

civilian contractors remove

whatever is salvageable of the

Other Pakistani soldiers

The 8,400 U.N. troops re-

maining in this lawless Horn

of Africa country -- mostly

Pakistanis, Egyptians and Bangladeshis — will all be gone by the end of March,

their pullout a result of the

failure of Somalia's rival war-

lords to agree on a govern-

already pulled back from the

hinterland, with all based

now in this violent Indian

Ocean city, hunkered down

Mogadishu, but their pre-

sence does not deter the cir-

The soldiers are still man-

behind razor-wire.

The U.N. soldiers have

ment of national unity.

will stay at force headquar-

ters just over the road."

\$150 million worth of equip-

ment still there.

MOGADISHU (AFP) -U.N. troops and staff retreated to the airport Tuesday from their sprawling compound inside Mogadishu, covered by helicopter gunships as they prepared to end the troubled two-year U.N. mission in Somalia.

Offshore, just over the horizon, a French warship stood guard, U.N. officials

Both the compound and the U.N.-controlled airport are vulnerable to stray gunfire as clans battle in the streets of south Mogadishu, but the area was relatively quiet Tuesday with only the usual rattle of occasional small-arms fire.

Fighting between rival Somali militias has surged as the U.N. operation winds down towards a final pullout date of March 31, with close to 200 people being killed and some 700 wounded since early December. ``

Many U.N. soldiers expect the warring clans to fight for control of the U.N. compound, the airport and the seaport as the final troops leave protected by an inter-

At the airport — living in tents and quarters made from shipping containers tucked in

personnel will disperse to other parts of the world as the U.N. Operation in Somacreate

group PARIS (R) - Leaders of France's five million Muslims, acting with government encouragement, announced the creation on Tuesday of a body to handle the delicate relationship between their community and French offi-

cialdom. Dalil Boubakeur, imam of the main Paris mosque who will head the group, said it was called the Representative Council of Muslims in France

(CRMF). Mr. Boubakeur and other traditionalist Muslim leaders spoke at a news conference presided by Interior Minister Charles Pasqua, who has long pressed France's Muslims to create such a group as a barrier to Islamic fun-

"We wish to serve our community and French society since Islam is now the second largest religion in France. With this new orgathe same status as other religious in the country," Mr. Boubakeur said.

Mr. Pasqua, who has carried out crackdowns in the past year against suspected fundamentalists linked to Islamic underground groups in Algeria, said France would speak only with the CRMF from now on when dealing with Muslim issues.

He broadly hinted at government financial backing for the group since most Muslims in France are poor immigrants from north or West Africa.

Mr. Pasqua and Mr. Boubakeur insisted the new body represented virtually all Muslim organisations in France with the notable exception of the fundamentalist-leaning National Federation of Mus-

lims in France. They acknowledged, however, that most Muslims in France were not members of any groups. Hundreds of thousands of unemployed youths are outside organised structures and Mr. Pasqua fears they are the ones likely to be recruited by fun-

Recent opinion puls have showed between five and 10 per cent of Muslims in France sympathise with fundamentalist aims while the vast majority seek integration into society at large and are sometimes only nominally re-

French authorities were locked last year in a struggle with fundamentalists seeking to encourage young Muslim girls to wear headscarves in the country's secular public schools against regulations. Mr. Pasqua said Paris frowned on foreign govern-ments offering funds to Mus-lim groups in France, as they

have until now, but he recognised it was the duty of individual rich Muslims to help brethren abroad. Rich Gulf states, especially Saudi Arabia, have paid in the past to build mosques and

create religious schools in

France, where the dominant

religion is Roman Catholic-Mr. Pasqua's statement was understood to mean such funds would still be welcome if they came under the guise of individual private dona-

Charles' friend Camilla to divorce

LONDON (R) — Camilla Parker Bowles - the close friend of Prince Charles and her cavalery officer husband are to divorce by mutual consent, lawyers for the couple said Tuesday. We have grown apart to such an extent that with the exception of our children and a lasting friendship, there is little of common interest between us and we have therefore decided to seek a divorce," a statement from the lawyers said. Solicitors Boo-dle Hatfield and Charles Russell said the couple had lived apart for two years and a decree NISI — a provisional order for divorce - would be granted this month. The announcement confirmed intense speculation that their 21-year marriage would not be able to withstand Camilla's long relationship with the heir to the throne. Prince Charles, who separated from . his wife Princess Diana two years ago, admitted last year he had committed adultery since his marriage broke down. He also said he was very close to Camilla, who has never spoken publicly of her relationship with the prince. Britain's tabloid Sun newspaper said Tuesday Brigadier Andrew Parker Bowles, who stood by his wife when the publicity broke over the affair, was taking the step because he felt the "time was right to start a new life'

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Most Britons want to halve cost of royalty

LONDON (R) — Most Britons want to halve the cost of the monarchy and think the number of royal palaces and staff should be reduced, a survey published Tuesday said. The ICM royalty poll in the Guardian newspaper found that 53 per cent of Britons want the monarchy's gyerail cost to the taxpayer, estimated at £50 million (\$77 multion) a year, to be cut. "The same percentage want the five royal palaces financed by the taxpayer... to be reduced to two," the newspaper said. "Slightly more - 54 per cent - want be shared with business as a floating conference centre,' t added. The random poll of 1,003 adults also found that 56 per cent of the people questioned said the 750 palace staff that are paid by the taxpayer should be reduced by half. "Eighteen per cent want no public money to be paid to the royal family... 32 per cent want the royal yacht taken out of service and 15 per cent want no public money spent on palaces and staff," the newspaper added. The findings support suggested plans by Britain's opposition Labour Party outlined by home affairs spokesman Jack Straw. He sug-gested sacking half of the country's royal highnesses and turning those who remained into a low-key Scandinavian-style monar-

Hillary Clinton trying to reshape image — paper

NEW YORK (R) — First lady Hillary Rodham Clinton said she had been "naive and dumb" about national politics and asked a group of women writers for suggestions on how she could make her public image more likeable, the New York Times reported Tuesday. "I am surprised at the way people seem to perceive me, and sometimes I read stories and bear things about me and I go 'ugh, I wouldn't like her either.' It's so unlike what I think I am or what my friends think I am," Mrs. Clinton was quoted as teiling the writers at a luncheon at the White House. "So I can only guess that people are getting perceptions about me from things I am saying or doing in ways that don't correspond with things I am trying to get across...," she said. The gnests were a group of women writers who cover style, gossip, personal advice and the first lady's social functions, the newspaper said. The paper said that while a year ago Mrs. Clinton said the failure in Congress of her health care plan was due to a male-dominated political system having trouble accepting her position of authority, in Monday's interview she put most of the blame on ...

2 sentenced to death for Mahfouz attack

HUCKSTEP, Egypt (AFP) A military court on Tuesday sentenced two Islamic militants to death for attempting to kill Egypt's Nobel Prize winning author Naguib Mahfouz.

The high military court at Huckstep base just north of Cairo sentenced to death Mohammad Nagui Mohammad Mustafa, 21, for stabbing Mr. Mahfouz outside his Cairo home on Oct. 14 and Mohammad Khodier Al Mahalawi, 22, for spying on the author.

Eleven militants were also entenced to hard labour for either participating in the attack or for other militant activities and three others

were acquitted. Following the verdicts Islamic militants chanted "prison or execution will not make us forsake Islam," and warned "Oh Jews, Mohammad's

army will return." Mr. Mahfouz, 83, who won the Nobel prize in 1988 and is the only Arab writer to have received the honour, spent 50 days in hospital mostly in intensive care following the attack.

He is an outspoken critic of the government and Islamic hardliners in a weekly newspaper column, and strongly supports Arab-Israeli peace

Egyptians were outraged at

gures, a diminutive man with trademark dark glasses and a regular at Cairo cafes for chats about literature. But militants have accused

him of blasphemy and in 1989 threatened him for his book "The Children of Our District," in which he depicts God as a father and the prophets as his children. Muslim authorities banned

The trial opened on Dec. 6 when the 16 defendants alleged they had been tortured during interrogation. The court gave life sent-

ences of hard labour to Amr Mohammad Ibrahim, 24, who gave the knife to the assailant, and to Hussein Ali Bakr Awad, 20.

It also sentenced one militant to 15 years hard labour, two to seven years, one to five years and five to three years of hard labour. Three were acquitted, including the youngest defendant, a 17-

year-old schoolboy.

Ibrahim visited Mahfouz's house on the eve of the attack, bearing a box of chocolates and dressed like someone from the Gulf to get close to the writer to kill him. But the author was out, his

wife Ateyat Mahfouz said. Ibrahim was wounded in the leg in a shoot-out during his arrest in a cafe in northern



being the brains behind the attack, Bassem Shahin, was

President Hosni Mubarak has charged military courts with trying Muslim militants as cases are generally tried quicker and there is no right

sentenced to three years. Another defendant sentenced to three years was a retired Egyptian army officer, Mustafa Abdul Bahi, a court official said.

Medical student Yasser Abu Aita, 25, got seven years after police found explosives in his room on the campus of

killed in the gun-battle.

to appeal. "Every law in the world condemns military tribunals but Egypt insists on judging ts before these courts while pretending to respect human rights," said Ahmad Hosni, a computer operator in a Cairo firm, who was

Cairo University. the attack against one of the Cairo. A militant accused of Berlusconi demands reappointment as premier or immediate elections

ROME (AFP) — Outgoing Italian Premier Silvio Berlusconi called Tuesday on President Oscar Luigi Scalfaro to reappoint him as head of a new government or call im-

mediate elections.
"We have called on the president of the republic to accept an attempt to form a new government led by Berlusconi because of the way the political situation is developing," the business tycoon-cum-politician said af-

ter meeting Mr. Scalfaro. If Mr. Scalfaro declined reappointing him, the only solution to the current political impasse would be mediate elections," Mr. Berinscomi added. The two men had also met Monday. Mr. Berlusconi's ultima-

tum came a day after most political commentators forecast that Mr. Scalfaro would name a new head of government close to Mr. Berlusconi's own right-wing Forza Italia party.

Several key political figures, including Berlusconi allies, have supported such a solution.

Mr. Berlusconi resigned on Dec. 22 after the break-up of his four-party coalition, sparking the crisis put on hold last week when Mr. Scalfaro fell ill and was

forced to suspend meetings on resolving the stalemate. The president, who has said he is against calling snap elections, is due to finish off meetings with all Italy's different political forces by

Wednesday, and sources said

he would probably name a new prime minister on Thursday.

Mr. Berlusconi's stance was endorsed earlier by Gianfranco Fini, leader of the neo-fascist National Alliance, one of four parties

on the Berlusconi team before it collapsed last month. "We will ask Scalfaro to allow us to create a new government directed by Silvio Berlusconi," Mr. Fini said. "If a second Berlusconi government is not possible,

early elections are the only route possible." If Mr. Scalfaro decides against dissolving the two chambers, "we will not support any government that does not reflect the vote" in the general elections last March that swept Mr. Berlus-

coni to power, Mr. Fini said. He said Mr. Berlusconi made the demand to stay on at a meeting with Mr. Scalfaro that ran late into Monday night. The meeting "went badly," Mr. Berlusco-

Observers here had suggested Mr. Scalfaro might seek to appoint as premier Lamberto Dini, the treasury minister and a former general-director of the Italian central bank, or Mario Monti, European commissioner in charge of the internal market. Both men are seen as

close to Forza Italia. Mr. Dini is not a deputy and could be called upon to act in a caretaker capacity, much as was the case for Mr. Berlusconi's predecessor, Carlo Azeglio Ciampi, a former governor of the Bank of

Mr. Ciampi, who spent a year in power, was chosen notably to help amend elec-toral rules which emerged from a reform of legislation Mr. Berlusconi has said he

is opposed to such a choice. but observers suggest he might accept it once it is imposed by the president.

Mr. Dini would be backed in parliament by the left and centre parties, along with

part of the Northern League. Northern League leader Umberto Bossi, whose defection from government caused its collapse, Monday faxed all of his deputies to ask them where they stood on supporting him or Mr. Berlusconi.

culation of the pick-up truck battle-wagons. behind sandhills — the troops NEWS IN BRIEF

Israel drops Golan from official visits

TEL AVIV (AFP) - The Israeli government will no longer propose to take foreign dignitaries to visit the Golan Heights during official trips, a foreign ministry spokesman said Tuesday. The Golan is no longer on the list of places which our official guests should visit," he said.
"If someone wants to go there he still can." In fact very few ministers and officials have taken up the offer to tour the strategic plateau. U.S. Defence Secretary William Perry on Monday was taken to see the Golan but, in line with tradition, observed the plateau from a helicopter which flew only over Israel proper.

Syria hopes for better ties between Iran, Gulf

RIYADH (AFP) - Syrian Foreign Minister Farouk Al Sharaa said Tuesday his country hoped to see an improvement in relations between Iran and the neighbouring Gulf states but denied Syria was acting as a mediator. Mr. Sharaa, who travelled to Tehran on Saturday, was received by Saudi King Fahd on Monday and handed over a message from Syrian President Hafez Al Assad. He told AFP on leaving Damascus that the message was about "developments in the region and the Middle East peace process. Syria "hopes to see an improvement in relations between Tehran and its neighbours in the Gulf to achieve stability in this region, but it is not undertaking any mediation towards he said. In Tehran. Mr. Sharaa asked for Iran's backing for Damascus' position in its talks with Israel and in recovering all territories occupied by Israel.

Iran spiritual leader bans Coke, Pepsi

TEHRAN (R) — Iran's spiritual leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenet is reported to have issued a religious ruling banning the consumption of the U.S. soft drinks Coca-Cola and Pepsi-Cola, already under fire from Iranian Muslim hardliners. Keyhan newspaper quoted a fatwa by Ayatollah Khamenei in response to a question about the drinking of the two U.S. soft drinks recently reintroduced to Iran. The newspaper said Avatollah Khamenei was asked: "Assuming consumption of foreign-made beverages, especially American Coca-Cola and Pepsi, politically strengthens world arrogance and financially helps Zionist circles, what would the Islamic decree on the issue be?" Ayatoliah Khamener ruled: "Anything that strengthens world arrogance and Zionist circles in itself is (forbidden)." Last year about 200 radical franian students protested

Sudan says Britain names new ambassador

KHARTOUM (R) - Britain has nominated a new ambassador to Khartoum, a post that has remained empty since the last envoy was expelled. Sudan's foreign minister said on Tuesday. He is Alan Goulty. Hussein Spieiman the trief a piess briefing. Sudan expelled Ambassadof other offendes a year ago, accusing him of interfering in its internal affairs. In retaliation Britain expelled the Sudanese envoy to London, Ali Osman Mohammad Yassin. Mr. Abu Saleh said Sudan was also considering sending an ambassador to London. In London, the Foreign Office declined to confirm the appointment. It said officially there had been no announcement.